

No. 6

VOL. XI

SUMMER 1956

# THE EASTERN CHURCHES QUARTERLY

*Editor:* DOM BEDE WINSLOW

*Associate Editor:* DONALD ATTWATER

THE ARMENIAN CHURCH UNDER SOVIET RULE

*Walter J. Kolara*

A FRENCH CATHOLIC'S VIEW OF BERDYAEV

*Stanislas Pungt*

THE ARMENIAN MEKHITARIST MONASTERY IN VIENNA

*Robert Murray, S.J.*

rites and CEREMONIES OF THE COPTIC CHURCH—X

*O.H.E.H.-Burmeister*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NEWS AND COMMENTS

OBITUARY

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Single Copies 3/-

## E.C.Q.

Literary Communications, Exchanges and Books for Reviews should be addressed to the Editor, *E.C.Q.*, St Augustine's Abbey, Raingate.

Agents: London: Geo. E. J. Coldwell, Ltd, 17 Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

U.S.A.: The Secretary, C.N.E.W.A., 430 Lexington Avenue, New York 17.

Belgium: Antwerp, 'Vita et Pax' Library, 13-16 Prince Albert Avenue.

Holland: Utrecht, J. B. van Rossum, Achter Het Stadhuis.

Egypt: Cairo, c/o Le Lien, 163 Avenue Reine Nazli.

S. Africa: Belleville, Cape-province South Africa, M. Sellmann, 'Gourdes' 8th Avenue, Boston Estate.

India: Fr E. R. Hambye, S.J., St Mary's College, Kurseong, D. H. Ry.

Yearly subscription: 12 shillings; 2 dollars; 80 Belgian frs, 6 guilders, etc.

Back numbers and single numbers, three shillings each.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS: The *E.C.Q.* has entered into an agreement with University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A., to make the *QUARTERLY* available to libraries in microfilm form.

The film copy is only distributed at the end of the volume. The microfilm is in the form of positive microfilm, and is furnished on metal reels, suitably labelled. Inquiries concerning purchase should be directed to University Microfilms, 315 N. Zeeb Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.

# THE EASTERN CHURCHES QUARTERLY

*(Continuation of Eastern Churches Number of 'Pax',  
founded 1931)*

---

VOL. XI

SUMMER 1956

No. 6

---

## THE ARMENIAN CHURCH UNDER SOVIET RULE

**T**wo events have determined the fate of the Armenian Church in the course of the last fifty years: the Armenian massacres in Turkey during the First World War and the coming to power of an atheist régime in Russia. The Armenian massacres were a classic case of genocide. A whole nation ceased to exist, all its members being either killed or forced into exile. The end of the Armenian nation in Turkey was the end of the Armenian Church in that country, a Church which before 1914 had fourteen archbishops, twenty-seven bishops, six abbots and as many as 1700 parishes and churches. Only the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople, who has not more than forty-two parishes and thirty-eight churches under his jurisdiction, has survived the extermination of the Armenian Church and nation in Turkey.

In Soviet Russia no such catastrophe befell the Armenians. Soviet policy towards them might best be characterized by saying that the communist régime has tried to preserve the body of the Armenian nation whilst destroying its soul.

### THE LOSSES OF THE CHURCH

If we compare Armenian church statistics on the eve of the Soviet occupation of Armenia with those of the present time, it becomes clear that the Armenian Church has lost much more than the Russian Orthodox Church through communist anti-religious policy. The number of Russian Orthodox parishes

and churches is now between one-quarter and one-third of what it was in Czarist times. And since 1943 the hierarchial structure of the Russian Orthodox Church has step by step regained its traditional shape. Most Russian episcopal sees which existed before the Revolution have been re-established. The Armenian Church, on the other hand, has suffered far more grievous losses. Less than ten per cent of all Armenian parishes and less than seven per cent of all Armenian churches have survived. In the Armenian Soviet Republic, where the believers are either under the direct jurisdiction of the supreme patriarch, the catholicos of Echmiadzin, or under the bishop of Leninakan, the number of parishes has been reduced by four hundred—from 459 to fifty-nine, and the number of churches from 491 to thirty-eight.

In the two neighbouring republics—Soviet Georgia and Soviet Azerbaidzhan—Armenian church life has declined even more drastically. Previously there was an Armenian archbishop in Tiflis and two bishops, one in Gori, Stalin's birthplace, and the other in Akhaltsikhe near the present Turkish border. Between them these three hierarchs cared for 235 parishes with 287 churches. At present there is only one archbishop in Georgia in charge of twenty parishes and fourteen churches. In Azerbaidzhan before the Revolution there were two Armenian archbishops and three bishops. These five Azerbaidzhanian bishoprics comprised 430 parishes with 473 churches. Now they have amalgamated into a single diocese with thirty-two parishes and thirty churches. However, this new diocese which has its centre in Baku, embraces not only the parishes of Azerbaidzhan but also the Armenian diaspora in the whole of Siberia and Central Asia. Before the First World War these scattered Armenian parishes had the archbishop of Astrakhan as their ecclesiastical head. Astrakhan was then a very important Armenian centre; it had six Armenian churches, including a cathedral, and there was also a seminary there for Armenian priests. The Armenian archdiocese of Astrakhan is not the only one north of the Caucasus range which has been abolished. The archdiocese of Bessarabia, which cared for the Armenian faithful in Western Russia—it had nineteen parishes with thirteen churches—was amalgamated with the bishopric of New Nakhichevan or Nakhichevan on Don, the Armenian suburb of Rostov. This diocese at present comprises only eight parishes and seven churches though before 1917 there were four churches in the town of New Nakhichevan alone.



## The Armenian Church Under Soviet Rule 249

The suppression of over ninety per cent of all Armenian parishes and churches in Soviet Russia has led to a most paradoxical situation. For instance, there are now more Armenian parishes and churches in North and South America than in the whole of Soviet Armenia. There are more churches and parishes in the Paris diocese of the Armenian Church than are left under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Tiflis. Out of the 446 parishes belonging to the Armenian Church all over the world only a little more than one-quarter (119) are in the Soviet Union, and only eighty-nine out of the 417 Armenian churches are on Soviet soil. Of the twenty-seven bishops, archbishops and patriarchs of the Church, only five have their permanent residence in Soviet territory.<sup>1</sup>

### THE COMMUNIST ATTITUDE TO ECHMIADZIN

These figures show very convincingly that the Armenian Church is not so much a Church of the Soviet Union as a Church of the diaspora which has its supreme hierarchical head, the catholicos of Echmiadzin, in Soviet territory. In this respect the Armenian Church differs from the Russian Orthodox Church, whose real and potential followers abroad form only a very small portion of her membership. But the difference between the two Churches goes further than that. The catholicos of Echmiadzin is not only the spiritual head of a Church, as is the Orthodox patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, but he is also a national symbol respected by Armenians throughout the world. The secular political power controlling Echmiadzin holds a key-position which, if skilfully exploited, can enable it, at least to some extent to dominate Armenian national life and Armenian communities all over the globe. That power must always take into account, however, that Echmiadzin is not an Armenian equivalent of Rome. It has never played the unique part in the destinies of the Armenian Church which the Vatican has played in the history of Catholicism. Rome has an unbroken record as an ecclesiastic centre—except for the short spell in which the popes resided in Avignon. Historians speak of the 'Babylonian captivity' of the popes to denote that their absence from Rome was an

<sup>1</sup> All figures about the strength of the Armenian Church are taken from MALACHIA ORMANIAN, *The Church of Armenia*, Second (revised) English Edition, London, A. R. Mowbray and Co. Ltd, 1955, pp. 205-12. They refer to the situation in 1954. The catholicos Vazgen I stated in a sermon of 15th July, 1956, that 'ten to fifteen new churches' would be opened by the end of 1956 in the various Armenian dioceses of the Soviet Union. (Erivan Radio, 22nd July, 1956).

extraordinary state of affairs. There is no such compelling historical reason for the Armenian Church to be centred in Echmiadzin. Until the fifteenth century the location of the Armenian patriarchal see was always changing, as was the residence of Armenian kings and princes in accordance with the ups and downs of Armenian history. There are at least seven places besides Echmiadzin from which the 'patriarch of all Armenians' exercised his jurisdiction at one time or another. So in our time, too, the patriarchal see could be moved away from Echmiadzin if this were required by special and extraordinary circumstances. Moreover, the catholicos of Echmiadzin has a traditional rival in the catholicos of Cilicia who resides in the Lebanese village of Antilias and exercises jurisdiction over the Armenians of Syria, the Lebanon and Cyprus. The catholicos of Echmiadzin and Cilicia are co-equal, the catholicos of Echmiadzin has a primacy of honour only. The catholicos of Cilicia is entitled to bless the holy chrisam and to consecrate bishops. In view of all these circumstances the leaders of the Soviet State have had to reckon with the possibility of the centre of gravity of the Armenian Church shifting beyond Soviet control if the catholicos of Echmiadzin were cut off from the Armenian congregations in other countries. It was not in the Soviet interest to let this happen and so the Soviet authorities kept in being as much of the Armenian ecclesiastical structure as was required for the fulfilment of the world-wide tasks of the Armenian Church.

As long as the catholicos is able to operate from Soviet territory, there is always a chance of influencing, with the help of the Church, Armenian public opinion in the Balkans, Western Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. At the same time the Soviet leaders were determined to see to it that the exploitation of the Armenian Church abroad should not lead to unnecessary concessions to the Armenian Christians living in Russia. So it became Soviet policy to reduce to a minimum the influence of Echmiadzin inside the Soviet borders whilst giving the catholicos the maximum of support in his endeavours to maintain his influence over the Armenian diaspora. Within the borders of the Soviet Union the communists not only closed the vast majority of the Armenian churches but also denied Echmiadzin a position of honour and dignity in contemporary Armenia. In a book on Armenia which was awarded a Stalin Prize in 1951 and which was written by Marietta Shaginian, a well-known Armenian-born Soviet writer, there is a passage about Echmiadzin which is

characteristic of the official approach. Madame Shaginian refers to the religious aspect of Echmiadzin as a matter belonging to history. 'In centuries gone by', she says, 'Echmiadzin used to be the centre of the national and religious unity of the Armenians and the highest person of the ecclesiastical hierarchy used to live there.'<sup>2</sup> There is no suggestion in the book that Echmiadzin is still an ecclesiastical centre and that it is still the residence of the catholicos. Even if the communists tolerate the catholicos in Echmiadzin for reasons of higher policy, they do not wish to advertise this unnecessarily. For them the ecclesiastical Echmiadzin belongs irrevocably to the past, and even if the monastery and the cathedral are occasionally the scene of impressive ceremonies including the election of a new catholicos, this has little importance from the communist point of view. It is only a kind of re-enactment of historical pageantry. The new Echmiadzin, as the communist rulers of Armenia see it, is synonymous with atheism and economic efficiency. The district of Echmiadzin has become famous for its advanced agricultural methods. The inhabitants of the locality of Echmiadzin itself form a large and prosperous collective farm whose fields and farm-houses face the monastery. It is called 'Anastvats', or in the English translation 'The Godless'. The land owned by the 'Godless' collective farm used to belong to the Armenian Church.

Though all Armenian communist leaders, have been hostile to religion, being adherents of the doctrine of materialism, some of them at one time showed a certain respect for the Armenian Church as a national institution. Some may even have been inclined to spare her the worst persecution. But after a while such moderate figures among the Armenian communists were usually swept away in one of the periodic purges. Charges of opportunism and collaboration with the class enemy were made against them. A case in point was the Armenian party secretary, Khandzhan, who was ousted from his post and committed suicide in 1936. He was alleged to have been in correspondence with an Armenian emigré politician of the Ramgavar Democratic Party which is known for its clerical connections. It was significant that the Armenian Khandzhan was denounced by the Georgian Beriya, who was then the head of the party and secret police for the whole of Transcaucasia. The fate of the Armenian Soviet Republic and

<sup>2</sup> Marietta Shaginian, *Puteshestvie po Sovetskoi Armenii*—'Travel Through Soviet Armenia', Moscow, 1951, p. 231.

its policy, including its policy in ecclesiastical matters, was usually determined by Georgian and Russian communists who did not have the traditional emotional attachment to the Armenian national Church an attachment which Armenian communists were sometimes unable to throw off.

#### KHOREN MURADBEEKIAN, OR THE PERIOD OF ACTIVE PERSECUTION

Before the communists discovered the uses which could be made of Echmiadzin, they tried to disintegrate the Church by supporting an allegedly democratic movement within her ranks. A 'Free Church' was founded in Armenia in 1924-25 in obvious imitation of the 'Living Church' which split off from Russian Orthodoxy. It had the support of several bishops and even published a magazine. The 'Armenian Free Church' experiment was of short duration. It enjoyed little support among the Armenian Christians. The Soviet authorities themselves soon discovered that it was more profitable from their point of view to penetrate the official traditional Church rather than to build up a rival body which, from the outset was suspected of being a Soviet instrument. A former G.P.U. agent, Gregorii Agabekov, a Transcaucasian by nationality who defected in 1930, has written a book *The Cheka at Work*, which asserts that the Soviet secret police was highly successful in its attempts to infiltrate into the ranks of the Armenian hierarchy. The allegations of Agabekov refer, of course, to the twenties, but they are not without interest. In France, the G.P.U. relied at that time on an Armenian archpriest whom it wanted to transfer to Persia and India where he could do more useful work. In Constantinople, the G.P.U. was able to read the entire correspondence of the Armenian patriarch of that city. In Greece the Armenian bishop (then Garabed Mazloumian) was at the disposal of the G.P.U. and carried out certain tasks on its orders.\* One may assume that such cases of Armenian priests and prelates acting as direct Soviet agents were the exception. The real service which the Armenian hierarchy rendered to the Soviet State did not take the form of a participation in the cloak and dagger operations of the G.P.U. but in its general pledge of loyalty towards the communist régime. This pledge was a *conditio sine qua non* of the survival of the Church both in Russia and Armenia. In Russia the main representative of the loyalty policy in the inter-war

\* Gregorii A. Agabekov, *Die Tscheka an der Arbeit*, Stuttgart-Berlin-Leipzig, 1932, pp. 154-60.



## The Armenian Church Under Soviet Rule 253

period was Metropolitan Sergii, the locum tenens of the patriarchal see; in Armenia it was Khoren Muradbekian.

Until 1930 Muradbekian was the power behind the ageing Catholicos Kevork V, who had been in office since 1912. From 1930 to 1932 Muradbekian was locum tenens of the catholicos and at the end of 1932 he himself became catholicos under the name of Khoren I. Muradbekian was a shrewd diplomat who was able to extract certain concessions from the communists, especially the reopening of a number of churches which had been forcibly closed, and the return of some church property which guaranteed the maintenance of the monastery of Echmiadzin. The political loyalty which the régime received in return was not so much the loyalty of the Armenian clergy in Soviet Russia as the benevolent neutrality of many Armenian priests and bishops abroad. This meant in practical terms that the diaspora church gave a lead in recognizing the Armenian Soviet Republic as the State of the Armenian nation, in observing the foundation day of Soviet Armenia—29th November—as an Armenian national holiday, and in respecting the red flag of Soviet Armenia as the Armenian national flag. Everyone of these symbolical recognitions was a most controversial issue for the hundreds of thousands of Armenians living abroad, and the fact that the Church came out in support of Soviet Armenia and its symbols was, therefore, a tremendous asset from the Soviet point of view. Many Armenians of the diaspora followed the example of the hierarchy and themselves assumed a positive attitude towards the Soviet régime in Armenia. But many others remained adamant in their opposition to communism and went into schism rather than make the slightest compromise with the Soviet government. In some countries the Armenian Church became the scene of rival political passions in which anti-communist nationalists and the supporters of a Soviet Armenia, who were not necessarily communists, fought each other with unbridled fanaticism. This struggle reached its tragic culminating point on Christmas Eve 1933, when the Archbishop Levon Turian, denounced as pro-Soviet by his opponents, was murdered in the Holy Cross Church of New York. The question of who was guilty of this assassination has since then divided the Armenian community in the United States.<sup>4</sup> But whoever was the immediate culprit, there can be no doubt that a great

<sup>4</sup> Conflicting versions of the event are given in K. S. Papazian, *Patriotism Perverted*, Boston, 1934, pp. 61-5 and Sarkis Atamian, *The Armenian Community*, New York, 1955, pp. 367-73.



deal of the moral guilt for the crime lies with the Soviet government. For it was the latter which forced the Armenian Church into a position where it ceased to be the traditional guide of the nation and became a fighting ground for political factions.

Throughout the whole inter-war period the Armenian Church had only one proud moment, and this was the solemn election of the catholicos in November 1932. The Soviet authorities hesitated a long time before allowing the election to take place, and two and a half years lapsed between the death of the old Catholicos Kevork V and the appointment of his successor. Finally, it was decided that the election could not be further postponed if the communists wanted to maintain their control over Echmiadzin. It took place at a time when anti-religious propaganda in the Soviet Union was at its climax. It does not seem that the Soviet authorities had a candidate whom they wanted to push at any price: so it was a comparatively fair election. The most distinguished living Armenian churchman of the period, Khoren Muradbekian, became supreme patriarch. There was no decisive majority in the first ballot, but in the second ballot Khoren was elected by sixty votes to nineteen. The election was the occasion of a great religious manifestation by the Armenian people. Thousands of Armenians flocked to Echmiadzin to witness the enthronement of the catholicos and thus to demonstrate their attachment to their ancient national Church.

Khoren I exercised the office of catholicos for over five years under the most difficult circumstances. He died on 6th April 1938, and it is widely believed that he was assassinated by the N.K.V.D. It has been asserted since that he was strangled in the palace of Echmiadzin because he refused to surrender church treasures.<sup>5</sup> However, this seems to be too narrow an interpretation. The catholicos was too important a man to be assassinated over such a comparatively trifling matter as the question of the remnants of Armenian church property. His violent death—if it was violent—must be seen within the context of Soviet internal developments in the period of the co-called Yezhovschina (Yezhov, was the head of the Soviet Police at the time). Under Stalin's general instructions and under Yezhov's immediate command, the N.K.V.D. in 1937-38 exterminated everybody, both in Moscow and in the republics, who could have provided an alternative government or who

<sup>5</sup> Vabe A. Sarafian, 'The Soviet and the Armenian Church', *Armenian Review*, Summer 1955, p. 97.



*[By courtesy of The Times]*

HIS HOLINESS KHOREN, ARMENIAN CATHOLICOS,  
ENTHRONED 14TH NOVEMBER, 1932, DIED APRIL, 1938



*[By courtesy of The Times]*

HIS HOLINESS VAZGEN I, SUPREME CATHOLICOS OF ALL ARMENIANS

might have supported an invading foreign army. So the N.K.V.D. did away with ambitious generals, 'Old Bolsheviks' enjoying popular prestige, 'bourgeois nationalists', and also 'dangerous' ecclesiastical leaders. The catholicos may well have been one of these. As a national and spiritual leader of the Armenian people he could too have played an important part in a time of political crisis.

In the atmosphere of terror which existed in the late thirties in the U.S.S.R., including Soviet Armenia, there could be no question of summoning a National Ecclesiastical Assembly to elect a new catholicos. Soon the outbreak of the war supplied an excellent and respectable reason for the postponement of the election. The Soviet government made ample use of this delay to transform the Armenian Gregorian Church into a more reliable instrument of the régime than it had ever been before. It was to become more subservient to the communist rulers than the Russian Orthodox Church.

In this period the destiny of the Armenian Church became closely connected with the name of Kevork Cheorekchian, who from 1938 was *locum tenens* of the Echmiadzin see. Cheorekchian was 70 years old when he became the acting head of the Church. He had had a good theological training, having studied divinity and philosophy at Leipzig University. In 1917 he became bishop, and from then on he occupied various high church offices, including that of exarch of the Armenian Church in Georgia. Armenian nationalists abroad have judged Cheorekchian rather harshly; they have often described him as a puppet of the communist régime, but this seems to be an unfair over-simplification. Cheorekchian well knew what harm the communists had inflicted on the Armenian Gregorian Church—the closing of Armenian churches, the arrests of priests—and also the truth about the death of Patriarch Khoren. Being rather old, and having gone through so many bitter experiences he may have thought that only an attitude of total and unqualified subservience could preserve the Church from future persecution.

#### COMMUNISTS AND ARMENIAN CHURCH HISTORY

The reconciliation between Church and State in Armenia at which Cheorekchian aimed was assisted by various external circumstances. In the first place there was a certain re-orientation of the Soviet communists towards Armenian history. The Armenians benefited from that reassessment of values which took place in Russia itself in the late thirties.

Various distinguished figures of Russian history, including certain Orthodox saints who had been great patriots—such as Dmitry Donskoy and Alexander Nevsky—were again recognized as important national figures worthy of the respect of the present generation. The Soviet government found it difficult to refuse the Armenians what it had granted to the Russians.

In Armenia this rewriting of history had a more immediate impact on the religious question than in Russia, for the history of the Armenian nation is very largely the history of the Armenian Church. The rehabilitation of the Armenian past meant at the same time rehabilitation and recognition of the great historical rôle of the Armenian Church. The heroic resistance of the Armenian people against its pagan and Moslem enemies could not be recalled without a tribute being paid both to the inspiration derived from the Christian faith and the leadership exercised by the Armenian patriarchs.

By revising its concept of Armenian history, the régime unwittingly allowed religion to return through a back door at a time when it seemed to have reached the lowest level of its external influence. This return of religion in the guise of history might best be illustrated by the republication in Armenia of the works of Raffi (1835–88), the greatest Armenian novelist of the nineteenth century. Until 1940 Raffi's works were not reprinted in the Soviet Union and could not even be obtained in public libraries. Raffi was persistently denounced as a 'bourgeois' nationalist. The situation changed after the outbreak of the Second World War. The Soviet régime was interested in propagating a militant patriotic spirit in Armenia, especially by recalling the courage and steadfastness which Armenians had shown in the past in the struggle against foreign invaders. In this new atmosphere it was thought that the works of such a patriotic writer as Raffi might serve a useful purpose. They were reprinted by a Soviet State publishing house. The first new edition was sold out within a few hours.

Among Raffi's historical novels there is one which deserves our special attention—*Samuel*. It gives an insight into Armenia's historical development in the second half of the fourth century, when certain Armenian aristocrats abandoned the Christian religion and embraced the Persian faith of Mazdeism. Raffi dwells at length on the fight waged by the Armenian people and the Armenian Church against this betrayal of Christianity. There are many passages in the novel which almost compel the contemporary reader to draw a parallel between the 'Godless heresy of Mazdeism', threatening to engulf Armenia



in the fourth century and the 'Godless heresy of communism', which at the present time is the official ideology of the country. If in reading Raffi's book one translates 'Persians' as 'communists' and if one replaces the names of the treacherous Armenian aristocrats by those of the communist leaders, the novel acquires a fascinating topicality. Such a sentence as 'They have destroyed the state, now they want to destroy religion and the people' is as true of Armenia to-day as it was 1500 years ago.<sup>6</sup> Raffi's novel also contains in parenthesis a whole treatise about the Armenian Church in the early Middle Ages, especially about the cultural and social rôle of the monasteries. 'The Monastery', Raffi says at one point, 'gave bread and fed they poor; it looked after orphans and widows and it educated the children of the nation.'<sup>7</sup> This positive appraisal is in striking contrast with what communist historians say about Christian monasteries.

Those examples show that Raffi's works contained dangerous religious contraband. No wonder that there was much regret in leading Soviet circles at the rehabilitation of Raffi; and after the war attacks against Raffi stressing his 'reactionary character' appeared in the Soviet press.<sup>8</sup> However, the régime could not disregard Armenian national feelings to such an extent as to re-issue the original ban on Raffi's works. It rather tried to undermine the historical prestige of the Armenian Church by other means. For instance, Soviet authors commended the Paulician heresy which in the ninth century acquired considerable importance in Armenia and which, if successful might have destroyed the Christian Church in that country. They have praised the heresy as a great popular movement which aimed at social equality and opposed the exploitation of the people by ecclesiastical and feudal lords.<sup>9</sup> Also nineteenth century Echmiadzin was attacked by the protagonists of the Soviet régime especially in connection with the 150th anniversary of the birth of Khachatur Abovian (1805-48), an Armenian writer and educationalist. A pamphlet published by the Soviet mass education society in 1955 described him as a 'merciless unmasker of Echmiadzin'.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Raffi, *Samuel*, Moscow, 1946, p. 30.

<sup>7</sup> Raffi, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>8</sup> *Pravda*, 5th October 1951.

<sup>9</sup> *Voprosy Istorii*, Nr. 1, 1955, p. 161, quoting a book on the Paulician Movement in Armenia by Melik-Bakshian published in 1953 by Erivan University.

<sup>10</sup> Ruben Zaryan, *Khachatur Abovian*, Moscow, 1955, p. 14. It would be incorrect to describe Abovian as anti-religious. He came from a profoundly religious family and spent his whole life in a religious environment. The fact that he clashed with certain backward clergymen in no way implies that he was anti-Church. (See *The Soviet Interpretation of Khachatur Abovian* by V. Shahuni, *Caucasian Review* Nr. 2, Munich 1956, p. 107.)

KEVORK CHEOREKCHIAN OR THE PERIOD OF RELATIVE  
TOLERANCE

Whatever second thoughts the Soviet authorities may have had about their new view of Armenian history, there can be no doubt that at least externally and superficially it produced a rapprochement between the Church and the State at the beginning of the Second World War. The outbreak of the war between Russia and Germany also resulted in more practical co-operation between the two. Faced by a foreign invasion, the Soviet government made an effort to enlist the material and moral assistance of the Churches for the defence of the motherland, and among others it counted on the help of the Armenian Church. The head of the Armenian Church, Cheorekchian, supported the war effort as wholeheartedly as the Orthodox Russian bishops and called upon the Armenian people to sacrifice part of their savings to build a tank column called after the Armenian national hero, David of Sasoon. Although a number of Armenian priests in the Crimea and the North Caucasus region went over to the Germans, the loyalty of the Church as a whole was not in doubt, and the authorities had every confidence in the *locum tenens*.

At last the war came to an end and it was possible to normalize the Church administration by arranging for the election of a new *catholicos*. It was a foregone conclusion that there was to be only one candidate—Kevork Cheorekchian. The last doubt about this was removed on 19th April 1945, when Stalin received the *locum tenens* in the Kremlin. The reception took place at a crucial moment in the history of the war—on the very eve of the capture of Berlin. That the Soviet generalissimo should have found time to discuss ecclesiastic problems with a 77 years' old Armenian archbishop is in itself remarkable. Throughout the period when he was supreme leader of the Soviet State, Stalin had had very few talks with church personalities—perhaps three or four altogether. The fact that he deigned to meet Cheorekchian had, therefore, its significance. No official record of the meeting is available but one may assume that Stalin outlined to the *catholicos-to-be* what he expected him to do in his new office and what assistance he was to give to Soviet policy in the immediate post-war period. Stalin may also have used the opportunity of announcing a number of concessions by which the position of the Armenian Church was to be consolidated.

Two months after his meeting with Stalin, Cheorekchian was duly and unanimously elected *catholicos* under the name

of Kevork VI. The election was carried out in accordance with Armenian canon law by the National Ecclesiastical Assembly, to which 111 delegates came from various parts of the Soviet Union and from all Armenian colonies abroad except of South America. Countries represented at the Assembly included U.S.A., Britain, France, Bulgaria, Greece, Rumania, Egypt, Persia, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, India and Turkey. From Turkey the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople arrived in person. The Soviet authorities gave every facility to foreigners to reach the Assembly in time. Many of the foreign delegates, including those from the United States, had their long journeys paid for out of Soviet state funds, and in Armenia they were guests of the Armenian Soviet government.<sup>11</sup>

However, the majority of the delegates were Soviet citizens from various walks of life—eighteen employees of various Soviet organizations, several collective farmers, six doctors, four engineers, four housewives and several scientists and artists.<sup>12</sup> Many of these delegates, no doubt, represented primarily or even exclusively the interests of the Soviet State and the Communist Party. But their presence at the Armenian Ecclesiastical Assembly did not mean that the election of the new patriarch was invalid from a canonical point of view. In the Armenian Church, the laity has a decisive say in ecclesiastical affairs. Right from the first Armenian Ecclesiastical Assembly in the year 365 the *potestas ecclesiastica* in the Armenian Church has belonged to the Armenian nation and not to the clergy.<sup>13</sup> This provision of Armenian canon law worked well enough throughout the many centuries when the Church and the nation formed a political, moral and spiritual entity in the midst of alien hostile surroundings. As long as there was an independent Armenian state, the rulers of Armenia were in most cases inseparably linked with the faith of the Armenian Church. When Armenia lost her independence the supreme patriarch became the ruler of the nation. But to-day when the principal official spokesmen of the Armenian nation are the leaders of an atheist government the situation is obviously different. These leaders may perhaps have no real mandate to represent the nation but officially they are the

<sup>11</sup> Vertanes, *Armenia Reborn*, published by the Armenian National Council, New York, 1947, pp. 73-4.

<sup>12</sup> *Soviet News*, 30th June 1945.

<sup>13</sup> Dr Abel Abrahamian, *The Church and Faith of Armenia*, London, 1920, p. 32.

nation and therefore the bearers of the potestas ecclesiastica—of course, only to the extent to which they care to exercise it. Moreover, Armenian canon law assumed its present shape at a time when every Armenian was a Christian believer. The Armenian nation was the sum total of the faithful. This is no longer the case to-day. The Armenian nation has become a purely secular ethnographic notion. The so-called 'nation' which elects the patriarch through delegates is, in part at least, an agnostic, if not atheistic, nation. The catholicos thus elected is only to some extent the head of a Church. His true position is so paradoxical and contradictory that it defies description in any conventional or legal terms. In Soviet Russia he is occasionally referred to as the 'catholicos of the believers and unbelievers', which probably comes nearest to the truth.

The events following the election of the new catholicos threw light on the terms of the bargain between Stalin and Kevork Cheorekchian. The Armenian Church was first of all allowed to replenish its hierarchy. The patriarch's first action after his election and enthronement was to consecrate ten new bishops including six for the diaspora. Then in September 1945 a theological seminary and a theological academy were opened in Echmiadzin. Finally, the Armenian Church was authorized to publish a religious journal under the title *Echmiadzin*. It took the place of the journal *Ararat* suppressed before the war.

In return, the new patriarch was to render two important services to the Soviet state; the first was to assist in the repatriation to Soviet Armenia of Armenians living abroad, and the second was to support the Soviet claim to the Turkish territory of Kars and Ardahan in North-Eastern Anatolia. Theoretically, neither of these services was a 'concession' on the part of the Armenian Church. On the contrary, one might argue that the return of the refugees to their Armenian homeland and the annexation of Kars and Ardahan, which historically speaking is part of 'Turkish Armenia', were both in the Armenian national interest and in the interest of the Armenian Church. This was indeed believed by many Armenian non-communists abroad. For a people living scattered in many parts of the world, a people decimated by the massacres which a Turkish government had inflicted on them, it was difficult to reject out of hand the dazzling promises of the Soviet régime. Even the most anti-Soviet Armenian organization, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation or Dashnaktsutyun, at

first succumbed to the temptation, and for a while supported the repatriation campaign. The very words 'Return to the Homeland' and the claims to ancient Armenian lands stirred up such patriotic passion that the motives of the Soviet government were entirely overlooked. Many Armenians did not realize that the launching of the repatriation action and the voicing of territorial demands against Turkey were not meant to promote the Armenian national cause and even less the cause of the Armenian Christian Church. They were intended to strengthen the might of the Soviet state and to enhance the striking power of the atheist-materialist doctrine.

It would be utterly unfair to expect from the Armenian catholicos that he should have given a lead to the Armenian people by exposing the Soviet manoeuvres. Living in Soviet territory and dependent on the goodwill of the Soviet authorities he could not have refused to lend assistance to the Soviet government on the two burning national Armenian issues. The communist leaders would have denounced him at once as a traitor to the Armenian nation—and worse than that, as a Turkish agent. So, willy nilly, he had to go the way of total collaboration. In his proclamations and pastoral letters to Armenians abroad he appealed to them to return to Soviet Armenia. In the articles published in *Echmiadzin* he and his collaborators called upon the 'patriotic Armenian clergy' to support the pro-Soviet organizations and to fight 'all traitors' and 'enemies of Armenia and the Armenian Church'.<sup>14</sup> Those denounced as traitors and enemies were not the enemies of Christianity but the enemies of the Soviet régime, in the first place the nationalistic Dashnaktsutyun movement.

The most important single move of the catholicos was a memorandum on the Armenian question which he addressed to the Big Three on 27th November 1945. In this document the catholicos described himself as 'Patriarch of all Armenias' and not, as is usual, as 'Patriarch of all Armenians'. He claimed to speak as the traditional 'protector' of the Armenian people. He traced the main stages of the persecution of the Armenians by the Turks and stated emphatically that there was no difference between the old Turkey of the Sultans and the new Kemalist Turkey. The Armenian problem could only be solved by annexing Turkish Armenia to Soviet Armenia. The memorandum ended with the following stirring appeal to the Big Three: '... we ... implore that the Turkish Armenian

<sup>14</sup> *Echmiadzin*, Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 1948.



provinces be united to Soviet Armenia, so that the Armenian nation may be complete and, gathered in the national home, in peace and security continue their interrupted cultural and educational work . . . For the success of this just and lofty work we appeal and pray for the help of Almighty God. May the Most High bless you and guide your mind and will to the fulfilment of the good. And, meanwhile, move the conscience of the leaders of present-day Turkey into atoning for their and their predecessors' heavy crimes so as to efface that greatest injustice perpetrated in this most enlightened and civilized century upon this peace-loving, industrious and creative people.'

If judged by its phraseology alone, the memorandum of the catholicos seemed to be permeated with national and religious sentiments. Certainly, the words of the appeal were chosen by the catholicos or one of his advisors. But the idea behind the appeal, namely, to supply ammunition in the Soviet war of nerves against Turkey, came from the Soviet government. The catholicos, who is only a private Soviet citizen, was bound to consult the Kremlin before embarking on a venture which, after all, affected Soviet foreign policy.

#### ECHMIADZIN'S RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW AND ROME

In his relations with other Christian Churches Kevork VI showed friendliness towards Russian Orthodoxy and hostility towards the Vatican. During his term of office relations between Echmiadzin and the Moscow patriarchate became much closer. Although much of the co-operation took place under the auspices of the government-sponsored peace campaign it was not altogether devoid of meaning for the churches.

The catholicos met the patriarch of Moscow and all-Russia on at least three occasions. The first time was in Moscow in July 1948, when the Russian Church celebrated the fifth centenary of its autocephalous status; the second time was in August 1950, in Tiflis and Echmiadzin; and the third time in May 1952 on the occasion of the ecclesiastical peace conference which was held in the Holy Trinity Monastery in Zagorsk. The most important of these three meetings was the second: it has already entered Russian ecclesiastical history as 'The meeting of the three patriarchs' for, apart from the catholicos and the Russian Patriarch Aleksii, it was attended by the Georgian Patriarch Kallistratos. Officially, the three patriarchs met to sign a peace manifesto to the Christians of the world,

but as they spent a whole week together it is likely that they dealt with other subjects as well and that the meeting served the cause of a genuine ecumenism. For instance, it seems that the catholicos and the Russian patriarch discussed the possibility of Armenian priests undergoing post-graduate studies at the Moscow Theological Academy. Indeed, in 1952, a first batch of eight graduates of the Echmiadzin Academy went to Moscow to study Orthodox theology.<sup>15</sup>

Unfortunately, Catholicos Kevork VI was not equally anxious to improve relations with the Roman Catholic Church. His first public statement after his election attacked the Vatican. Having referred to the contribution of the Armenian, Orthodox and Anglican Churches to the war effort, he added: 'It is particularly painful to think that there is a Christian Church which did not join our blessed cause. More—that that Church supported the Nazi enemies of the Lord.'<sup>16</sup> This attack on the Vatican was as much in line with Soviet wishes as the statements of the catholicos about the repatriation campaign. But in all likelihood he did not speak up against the Catholic Church to please the Soviet authorities but primarily because he was bound to consider it as a competitor. There is an Armenian Catholic Church with tens of thousands of followers outside the Soviet Union. It has a tradition of several centuries and has attained a high standard of learning, particularly in the Order of the Mekhitarists. The head of the Church, who is under the supreme authority of the pope, also carries the title of 'patriarch' and 'catholicos'. In 1937 a man of particular erudition became the 'patriarch of the Catholic Armenians'—Petros Agagianian. He was born in the Caucasus, and although he has lived many years abroad, particularly in Rome, he has always identified himself with the Armenian people. In 1946 his prestige was further enhanced by the fact that he was created a cardinal—the second Armenian to accede to that honour. When Kevork VI called upon the Armenians to 'return home' he found that only one prominent Armenian figure abroad stood in the way of the repatriation campaign—Agagianian, or, as he is called officially, Petros XV. Agagianian warned the faithful against the pitfalls of the repatriation campaign and the unscrupulous propaganda by which the Soviet authorities tried to encourage it. In a pastoral letter of 6th July 1946 his warning was gentle and reticent. It became more forceful in another pastoral letter issued in

<sup>15</sup> *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, No. 6, 1954, p. 69.

<sup>16</sup> *Soviet News*, 30th June, 1945.

1947, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. There the patriarch spoke of the bitter reality and material misery in Soviet Armenia and denounced especially the negation of the elementary human rights, such as freedom of conscience and freedom of speech.<sup>17</sup>

#### THE ELECTION OF VAZGEN BALGIAN

Many prelates of the Armenian Church abroad may be expected to agree with Cardinal Agagianian's assessment of the 'bitter reality' of Soviet Armenia. This disillusionment of Armenian ecclesiastical dignitaries with the situation in the Armenian Soviet Republic became more clear after the death of Kevork VI. The catholicos died in May 1954 and the Armenian Ecclesiastical Assembly met in Echmiadzin in September 1955 to elect a new supreme patriarch. The number of delegates to this new Assembly was larger than in 1945, 137 Armenian laymen and clergy participated in the vote against 111 in the elections ten years before. Nevertheless, the Assembly was less representative than its predecessor. Those absent included the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople, the locum tenens of the catholicate of Antilias and the locum tenens of the Armenian patriarch of Jerusalem. The absence of the latter was particularly significant, for originally there had been a widespread desire among Armenian church people to elect him catholicos in accordance with what were believed to be the wishes of the late Kevork VI. The locum tenens refused to be a candidate, for an Armenian ecclesiastical dignitary living outside Soviet control is not likely to put himself at the mercy of the Soviet government by assuming the ungrateful post of catholicos. Moreover, the election of a prelate coming from outside the Iron Curtain would have been an affront to the Soviet régime and jeopardized the position of the Church in Soviet Armenia. So the delegates assembled in Echmiadzin had their hands tied: they had to elect a man who enjoyed the confidence of the Soviet government and who was known to that government for his loyalty. One hundred and twenty-five out of the 137 delegates voted for Vazgen Balgian, the head of the small Rumanian-Bulgarian diocese of the Armenian Church. The remainder of the votes were cast for the Armenian patriarch of Constantinople and the Armenian archbishop of North America.

<sup>17</sup> Lettre Pastorale de Son Eminence le Cardinal Grégoire Pierre XV Agagianian, Beyrouth, 1947, p. 6.

## The Armenian Church Under Soviet Rule 265

The Ecclesiastical Assembly which elected Vazgen was packed with Soviet citizens to an even greater extent than the Assembly of 1945. Ninety-seven delegates represented the Armenians of Soviet Russia and only forty came from abroad. One may take for granted that none of the ninety-seven delegates from the Soviet Union were free agents—but how many of them were true Christians it is impossible to ascertain. Some no doubt attended the Assembly with the firm intention of supporting the Soviet communist cause; but others were probably torn by a great internal conflict: they wanted to do their duty as Christians and at the same time found it necessary to submit to the atheist Cæsar. This was probably the case of the most distinguished Armenian layman participating in the Assembly—Āvetik Isaakian, the greatest living Armenian writer. The photographs taken during the festivities at Echmiadzin usually showed him sitting next to the patriarch himself. Isaakian, who is Chairman of the Union of Soviet Writers of Armenia and a member of the Armenian Soviet Parliament, symbolizes the dilemma facing the non-communist Armenian living under Soviet rule. On the one hand, he is determined to adhere to the Christian tradition of his people and, on the other, he is forced, or sees fit, to write poems in praise of the communist rulers to whom this tradition is anathema.

One would like to assume that the new catholicos, Vazgen I, is both a devout Christian and a sincere Armenian patriot. But in view of the strong pressure which the Soviet régime brings to bear on the see of Echmiadzin one may wonder whether he will be allowed to be either. Moreover, the biography of the catholicos, as published in the Soviet press,<sup>18</sup> contains some disquieting features. This is what it says: 'Vazgen I, supreme patriarch and catholicos of all Armenians, was born in Bucharest on 20th September 1908. In 1936 he graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature of Bucharest University and until 1943 was a teacher at the Bucharest Armenian school. In 1943-44 he studied at the Theological Faculty of Bucharest University. In 1943 he was ordained vardapet, and in 1951 he was made a bishop. In 1954 Bishop Vazgen was elected a member of the Supreme Spiritual Council of Echmiadzin. Vazgen I, supreme patriarch and catholicos of all Armenians, is one of the active officials of the peace movement in Rumania. In 1954 the Presidium of the

<sup>18</sup> *Izvestiya*, 4th October 1955.

Supreme National Assembly of the Rumanian People's Republic awarded him the Order of the 'Star of the Republic'.

There are two things worthy of note in this biography; one is Vazgen's rapid promotion in the Armenian hierarchy once he abandoned the teaching profession; and the other is the obvious satisfaction of the communist authorities at his participation in the peace campaign. A more detailed biography in the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate refers to Vazgen Balgian as an author. It mentions two of his books, the first is *Father Khrimian as Pedagogue*.<sup>10</sup> Father (in Armenian 'Airik') Khrimian was one of Balgian's predecessors. He was catholicos at the beginning of the century, an ardent churchman and an ardent Armenian nationalist. One of his principal claims to fame is the steadfast resistance which he opposed to the Czarist government in 1903 when it attempted to deprive the Armenian Church of its property and especially of its schools. Khrimian, sure of the support of the entire Armenian nation, refused to hand over the church property and in the end the government had to give in and withdraw the confiscation order. A Khrimian could exist in Czarist Russia but could not exist under the much more despotic Soviet régime. Balgian could not become a new Khrimian even if he wanted to but his other book shows that one may expect him to compromise with the atheist authorities rather than to fight against them. This book entitled *Beneath One's Native Sky* contains the most enthusiastic tribute to the Soviet Union. For instance, it includes the following appeal to Armenians living abroad: 'Armenians abroad should realize once and for all that it is Soviet rule and the Russian people alone that are the ultimate guarantors of our national life . . . and of the realization of a golden future of the Armenian nation'.

After his election Vazgen I announced that he would become a Soviet citizen. The announcement was made in the following terms at the final meeting of the Armenian National Ecclesiastic Assembly of 1955: 'I am extremely pleased to announce that, following my election as supreme patriarch and catholicos of all Armenians, I have submitted to the Government of the Soviet Union a request that they grant me Soviet citizenship, which has been my dream now for years. To-day the Armenian nation is stronger and more powerful than it has ever been in its age-long history. Shoulder to shoulder with the great Russian people and other Soviet peoples the Armenian people

<sup>10</sup> *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, Nr 12, 1955, p. 66.



is creating its own happy and joyous life.'<sup>20</sup> The official report added that the last words of the catholicos were greeted by 'loud cheers and applause'. One is tempted to ask who cheered and applauded a statement which so obviously served the propaganda purposes of the Soviet State?

The election of the new catholicos lent itself only too well to a Soviet propaganda campaign intended for the Armenians in foreign lands. The Soviet government received the foreign delegates, both clergy and laymen, with great friendliness. The delegates were lavishly entertained and were shown round the country. It was also announced to them that the Soviet government had spent four million roubles on the repair of the basilica of Echmiadzin. A most detailed account of the consecration and enthronement of the catholicos and all other festivities was broadcast by the Soviet-Armenian radio station—even if only in its transmissions for Armenians abroad which are in the West Armenian dialect.

However, the ceremonies which marked the election of Vazgen I seem to have had a result which the Soviet régime had not intended. It supplied the framework for something like religious revival among a section of the Armenian people. No wonder that the régime attacked the reactionary character of religion again once the foreign ecclesiastic visitors were safely out of the way. On 6th January 1956, the day of the Armenian Christmas, a violent attack against the Christian religion was launched by the same Armenian radio station<sup>21</sup> which three months earlier had broadcast the prayers of the Armenian National Ecclesiastical Assembly and the blessings of the new catholicos. Thus the communist propagandists themselves destroyed the myth about Soviet friendliness towards the Armenian Church.

WALTER J. KOLARZ.

<sup>20</sup> Erivan Radio, 11th October 1955.

<sup>21</sup> The broadcast was entitled 'Marxism-Leninism on the harmfulness of religion'. It propagated the new (communist) holidays which are to take the place of religious holidays and poured contempt on the faithful who 'believe that marriage by ecclesiastical rites brings solidarity and happiness to family life'.

## A FRENCH CATHOLIC'S VIEW OF BERDYAEV

[NOTE.—The essay here translated constitutes the Preface to the French edition of Berdyaev's early work on 'Human Creativity' (*Le Sens de la Création*, Bruges, Desclée de Brouwer, 1955), which appeared almost simultaneously with the English edition (reviewed in our Winter issue of 1955). It is printed here for its interest to English readers, as a considered estimate of Berdyaev's thought by a continental Catholic. Its writer is widely known and respected in France and Belgium.—EDITOR.]

\* \* \*

NICOLAS BERDYAEV was not a Catholic. Catholics, indeed, might be surprised to see him sustain opinions such as appear to run counter to the teachings of their Church, as also—in a general way—to those of the Orthodox Church. Berdyaev, however, remained in communion with his own Church: which fact by no means hindered him from criticizing it—certainly not in its essence, but in its behaviour in the historic sense—in its timidities, above all in its passivity—in its fear of unfolding its divine wings in (or above) its earthly *milieu*—in its servility towards the temporal powers. His first denunciation of the ambiguity resulting from that official connection of the two governments—secular and religious—in the so-called 'Holy' Synod, which did in fact set the Russian Church under the tsar's control, brought down upon Berdyaev a decree of exile, which the sudden outbreak of the 1917 Revolution came just in time to annul. To this synod, which could thus unrighteously consecrate an autocratic power, the Christian philosopher opposed the patriarchal Church, as this has since been re-established.

Nevertheless, not a few will be astonished at many points in the reading of this extraordinary work (written before 1914, yet in which Berdyaev is already seen entire), that the Orthodox Church had not, on its own part, excluded from its communion that so indocile philosopher who was its author. His faith, certainly, like his spiritual nobility, remains beyond question; but Berdyaev judged the ecclesiastical hierarchy, even at times the official theology—without feeling the least need to attenuate his thought (I would say, on the contrary!), and it would have been only natural to see that hierarchy, and its theologians, somewhat disturbed. But in Russia, the

Orthodox Church—its magistry more or less confined to meditation on the Greek Fathers, and to the preaching of asceticism, and having, moreover, no properly scholastic tradition—is less scared than our Catholic theologians at adventurous formulations such as one finds in profusion in the works of Berdyaev. Not that the hierarchy had ever made its own any of his views, nor even that it had not at times put the faithful on guard, here and there, against the revolutionary, or critical, mind of a man whom everyone admired for his erudition, his irreducible sincerity, and his moral worth, but who passed for an 'original', isolated, which he was indeed, perhaps for an *illumine*—which he felt himself to be.

*Illumine*, yes! for as with his French forerunner, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin (who had so great an influence over the most distinguished minds at the end of the eighteenth century), it is the German shoemaker, Jacob Boehme, the author of *De Signatura Rerum*, that Berdyaev first of all invokes: and with him, the mystical poet Angelus Silesius. He refers more often to Boehme, or to his Catholic commentator Franz von Baader, than to St Paul, or even to St Basil. When he mentions St Thomas Aquinas, it is as if he were speaking of a notary, that is to say, of one of those masters of *objectivization*, naïve realists, who figure to themselves that one can immobilize a doctrine which ought to be inapprehensible and pure *movement*. So it is that Berdyaev has not the air of one who remembers that St Thomas has from God that definition which is proper to respond absolutely to all that which he, in his gropings, seeks so passionately to evoke: the *actus purus*. But let us repeat it, Nicolas Berdyaev was not Catholic, or rather, I repeat it again, he was not *a* Catholic, and would never have cared to appear one.

Then why, one will ask, should Catholics interest themselves in him? It is very simple. The mind of Berdyaev, which is nobility itself, I insist upon this, opens up passages into our obscurities, and sets splendours flashing where we are accustomed to perceive nothing. And his heart is so upright that, even through unacceptable propositions, he yet brings to the Catholic a thousand reasons for the renewal of his faith. I will go further. I do not believe Berdyaev's heresies to be so very heretical. But his cult of Freedom is so imperious that he will not enclose himself in any constraining 'orthodoxy'. For this would be to do wrong to the sole 'fair lady' whom he has resolved to serve, and whom he must at every instant elect in place of the goddess Necessity, who presents herself

to the Christian, as he thinks, only as a temptation. By his fidelity to the divine Freedom, Berdyaev is a spirit who refuses the facile mistress who offers herself to us under the common forms of a purveyor of security. Even if he has the vocation of orthodoxy, he needs to escape from its objectivizations, under pain of betraying that sole thing which, in us, according to Berdyaev, should be uncreated, being of the divine nature of the spirit, because it is of the divine Spirit itself: namely, Freedom.

It is here that the metaphysician could object that Berdyaev finds everything on one postulate: Freedom is before Being. Thus it would be, at the least, in God and, by the phenomenon of reflection, we should find this process in our own subjective psychism. That *Ungrund* of Jacob Boehme, that absolute 'One' of Plotinus, that primordial Non-Being of the speculative mystics, bears, with Berdyaev, the character of Freedom. And through all the length of *The Meaning of Creation*, it is Freedom which appears as the divine motive-power of that spiritual creativity which God expects of us. There, moreover, is the central theme of this work, and the sole subject-matter in two words: Freedom—Creation, of the other works of this Russian philosopher. Now the fact that it is pure freedom which, in God, precedes Being<sup>1</sup>—the fact that God must be, in himself, *Freedom* and not *Being*<sup>2</sup>—lets us see that the philosopher of 'creative freedom' has formed of Being itself, an idea *à la* Kant: that he has been deprived, like the generality of modern philosophers, of that 'intuition of being' (not merely of one of its attributes), which marks the metaphysician.

In a word, this dialectician is not a metaphysician; and this is probably the reason why his 'heresies' are not real ones. But what is a reality in him, is a virtue, or rather the virtue (the courage, as he would say) which determines his choice. His reasoning may accommodate itself to heretical formulations, but in fact, his will chooses the true. That is a phenomenon more unusual than one would think. I may be deemed paradoxical, but I cannot help feeling this; and I make it my duty to take note of it: a doctrinal deviation by any

<sup>1</sup> And not an ante-being (which would be, as others have said, the 'being before being'), but Being, in which the dyad, 'freedom-necessity' is present, not as a contradictory, but as the freedom (possessed by God alone) not to be non-being (such freedom being necessary to Him, who is Being, only that He may be His own Self-cause, and for no other reason).

<sup>2</sup> Because this 'being' is, after all—for Berdyaev—only the objectivization of a created, and therefore limited mind: a fatally inadequate concept since—again for Berdyaev—such analogy is fallacious.

Catholic philosopher, contemporary with Berdyaev, would be more grave, or would seem to me more grave, than many of the errors, patent to the eyes of theologians, which Berdyaev expresses. And my judgement would move in this way: the least doctrinal deviation in a Catholic philosopher diminishes the meaning of a doctrine—defaces, mutilates, the entire doctrinal currency. But the pseudo-heresies of Berdyaev never mutilate wilfully; they merely proceed from an unsatisfied thought, from the thought of a genius, which is at all times an *augmenting* thought. It is simply that Berdyaev is schismatic on principle, like the knight-errant who sets himself deliberately at the margins of 'this world', which is the preserve of the 'profiteers', and of those who envy them—of the bourgeois: accomplished, or in becoming.<sup>3</sup> Berdyaev dresses his truths, which are our truths, as 'heresies'; only that he may love them the more freely. And it is in vain that his dialectic piles up the risks of heterodoxy and scandal, because what he is intent on saying is always just—profoundly and sublimely just.

Moreover, he has hammered out for himself an idea of philosophy very far removed from that of Aristotle or St Thomas. Philosophy is not to be concerned with 'knowing': that is the rôle of science, with which all connection, in Berdyaev's eyes, is of evil omen. In 1914 he writes with much pertinence, that with Bergson the references to the science of his time dishonour his beautiful philosophy. Berdyaev's own philosophy refuses even to embarrass itself with logic; it is the art, or more exactly the 'genius' of thought. For Berdyaev, in reality, philosophy is the intellectual manifestation of the uncreated, yet creative, freedom, which is in man, more profoundly than all the rest: as it is said that 'in the beginning—ἐν ἀρχῇ—the Word was in God. It is the same Word, the same spiritual and creative transport which enters into man, but which *the man* cannot inherit, so long as he refuses to be the child of God, and to partake of God's freedom (the 'liberty of the children of God'). Philosophy, for Berdyaev, is an act of the spirit, which creates true values, because it emanates, rises up, out of the *Ungrund*, out of the 'abyss' of freedom—that bottomless 'something' antecedent to all being.

One can understand thus that, for Berdyaev, philosophy (his own), that of 'creative freedom', is nothing other than an

<sup>3</sup> The Russians, since they have read Karl Marx, have identified among the bourgeois, the *petit-bourgeois*, consisting of all those who distrust not only social, but infinite progress.



expression of spirituality, an illumination of the cosmos : that it opens, in its normal course, on mystery, and touches, on the one hand upon prophecy, and on the other, upon magic. All this stands out clearly from the pages of this book.

Thus, we could apply to the Russian philosopher, what was said in the sixteenth century of the young Pico della Mirandola : that he introduced into philosophy the spirit of the tourney and of chivalry. And the author of *The Meaning of Creation* is perfectly conscious of this ; for it is as an aristocrat that he has always been led by his 'fair lady' to defend those who attack the false peace of the world ; and to defend them, not in consideration of democratic principles (which he holds in horror), but of the simple dignity of that *image and resemblance* of God which man is, every man : in a word, of the 'human person' (to use the modern banality). Berdyaev was all for social struggle and spiritual warfare. If he figured among the revolutionaries and men of the left, that is because he placed himself philosophically on the side of change. He was, we are about to see for what reason, the enemy of all immobility, of all bourgeois complacency, of all artistic sclerosis, in a word, of all *status quo*. Immobility is, for him, nothing but bewitchment ; the hero will be he who shall put an end, by his creative act, to the enchantments of the Forest of Brocéliande. He was one of those rare thinkers of the twentieth century who dared to prefer the *truth* of romanticism to that of classicism. He holds on this point the same positions as Ernest Hello, who had drunk, it is true, at the same German sources as he had done. 'A word is an act : that is why I try to speak', Hello had written, expecting perhaps of this word, solemnly inscribed at the beginning of one of his books, as it were a renewal of creation.

\* \* \*

But Berdyaev is of a time in which artists no longer make the clouds rumble and launch down lightnings upon their scared and swooning figures : he belongs to his own epoch, even if it displeases him. He dotes upon Botticelli and Leonardo, but accepts also his contemporaneity with Picasso (to whom he was one of the first to call attention) ; and he can distinguish 'the shape of things to come' in the efforts of futurism and in the cruel 'surgeries' of cubism. He, too, has turned his back on tradition, the better to cast down the walls which hide the unknown of tomorrow. And his chivalric philosophy goes forward like the painting of Braque and Picasso ; but it is to thought, not to art, that he adapts this spirit of adventure.

And not just to any thought, but to the deepest : to the thought that man can have in freedom upon God ; and, when once he has felt within him, as it were the 'birth' of God, then upon man, God's *image and resemblance*. Herein is his 'genius', or his system of the *géniale* ; when all is said, this is, for him, no other than philosophy : a *génialité* (and he uses the word at every turn when he would praise a thought, a spiritual experience he has found to be fully exercised). It is here, too, that his propositions seem, for a Catholic, at their most adventurous ; yet it would be unpardonable not to go all the way with him, were it only to correct them in the light (if one can call 'lights' those luminous obscurities) of experimental mysticism and the deposit of faith. When Berdyaev, disencumbered of all preventive logic and theological paraphernalia, sets out in the name of his knightly love in the tracks of the discoverers of God, he meets a duality : it is always the same—God and Man. Not just any man, but Man Absolute, the 'Veronica' (*vera icon*), the true image and resemblance of God, the ancient Adam Kadmon ; that Adam whom God (*et homo factus est*) made of himself (or that he wills yet to make of himself) : Christ. For Berdyaev, if there is God *and man* when he looks towards God, it is immediately Christ that he has in view. Though he hardly mentions Duns Scotus, the Scotist idea of the eternal Christ (or, in this sense, of the eternal Man) would surely have attracted him. For if he blames Christianity for having no anthropology, and sees in this the secret of its weakness at the present time, it is simply that he is fully prepared to replace it by a Christology which would respond—as he thinks—to all the needs of humanity. For Berdyaev, indeed, what God expects of us is not that we lose ourselves in him in a mystical self-outpouring (he would consider this mere pantheism), but that we attain to the stature of the Absolute Man (which the obsession with sin and with the gaining of individual salvation, his chief 'phobia', will always hinder). Does this mean that Berdyaev would counsel us disregard sin in order to become real men—after the fashion of too many pseudo-mystics, by not hesitating to commit it ? Not at all. As Berdyaev understands it, unconcern with sin means renunciation of it, the turning completely away from it. The chapter (in *The Meaning of Creation*) on sexuality and marriage (with its daring 'Malthusianism') will not fail to disconcert some modern Christians. And yet, how evangelical it is, in its purifying simplicity, in its great 'pneumatic' flight ! But here again, Berdyaev's ideas are admissible only in their

harmony with the spirit of creation which God has breathed into us that we may undertake what the philosopher calls 'the work of the eighth day'.

This must be man's work. God would not have created us out of his Eternity, if not to be creators in time, in his own image. And it is here that Berdyaev shows himself so new; for there is no question, in his eyes, of artistic or scientific productions: the one and the other are mere symbols. It is the reality of a spiritual creation which is foreseen and desired for us by God (or at least by THAT which is Creator in God). That interior Movement which brings about that God in three persons—Triune—is not an impassibility, as he has seemed (to some), but a creative dynamism—a God who (to use Nietzsche's word about man) would be, after an ineffable manner, something—Being—whose purpose is to surmount himself to all eternity. Madness, no doubt! and Berdyaev does not write this; but to me he has the air of thinking it. And when he says that Man must be born in God, as God is born in Man, if we are to have a perfect Christology—an absolute anthropology—he foresees an exchange of love between two persons, as this exists in God. And one begins to see taking shape, passing between the one and the other, the Holy Spirit, busied in realizing the transfiguration of the world.

But that the Kingdom may come, Berdyaev's God wills it so that, in the meantime, we should pass through the ending of the world: of 'this world' for which Christ did not pray (for it is an obstacle to his glory: to the establishment of the Kingdom, if we will: to the reign of the Holy Spirit working through Man). In such a vision as this we do not ask for precise details, which he could not supply to us: we have indices of them already, revealed (though obscurely) in the non-evolutional and freely contrasted successions of history. Berdyaev presents his philosophy to us at all times as an eschatology. But this latter, in its completely Christian spirit, has for its aim only to deliver us from 'this world' of constraints and limitations—from 'this world', in a word, of *necessity*—which must be overcome. Unfortunately, before the knight has gone into action, all the falsifiers of the Absolute, all the *possessed* (in Dostoevski's sense), in other words, all the demons, have attacked the limitations of 'this world' in a spirit completely contrary to that of freedom.

In 1900, the young Berdyaev, who had exorcised his own Marxism and overcome his own materialism in a work which

had awakened attention in Russia,<sup>4</sup> Berdyaev the 'knight-errant', had not yet had the experience of Bolshevist communism, had not yet seen the hatching of Fascism and the apparition of the hideous blasphemy of Nazism. Before dying, he was to know the crushing weight, the dolorous bitterness of them all. 'After the inward agitation connected with the experience of creative exaltation through which I had passed, I have never betrayed my faith in the creative vocation of man. But my hope of a new creative epoch, which I had believed to be imminent, began to fade by reason of the catastrophic events': thus he puts it in his *Autobiographie spirituelle* (English edition *Dream and Reality*). These historic catastrophes, as he had always foreseen, would 'not create absolutely new worlds', they would only 'give the impression of it'. But, he added, 'they showed themselves unfavourable to creation as I had conceived of it, as I had imagined it for the imminent new religious-creative epoch'. The Parousia stood postponed.

\* \* \*

Berdyaev wrote *The Meaning of Creation* as though in a single act and, as he himself says, 'almost in a state of ecstasy'. This avowal is important; for it proves that, if there is genius in Berdyaev, it is in this book that it wells up with the greatest spontaneity, as a consequence of 'freedom'. The philosopher insists, reveals himself, develops himself, takes nothing back. We touch his thought in the quick, in this work which he deems capital, and which he compares only to that other, much later book, *The Destiny of Man*. At the time of writing *The Meaning of Creation* he seemed to himself like one of those men of the Renaissance whom he had seen 'overflowing with creative powers'. At that time he was inspired: he had grasped something dazzling and unknown between God and Man. 'I admitted', he writes, speaking of his book, 'that man holds his creative gifts from God; but there is an element of freedom, inherent in the creative acts of man, which is determined neither by the world nor by God. Creation is the response of man to the call of God.'

If one deems this assertion very pretentious, Berdyaev answers with the incontrovertible truth: 'if the work of redemption and salvation can dispense with creation—human creation—the creative action of man is indispensable for the Kingdom of God'. In short, God asks of us a collaboration which is written, if we will, *in aeternum*, in the fact (which has come to pass even though provoked by the sin of man), of

<sup>4</sup> *Subjectivism and Individualism in General Philosophy.*

the Incarnation of the Divine Word. For Berdyaev, Christianity will be realized, as happens in the lives of saints, only when it shall be 'in so far as religion of human divinity'. The philosopher has, he recognizes, 'the daring consciousness of the need which God feels for the human creative act—of the nostalgia for creative man which is felt by God'. He explains himself: 'Human creation continues the creation of the world. The continuation and perfecting of the world-creation is a work at once human and divine: God working with man, man working with God.' Does not the full realization of a Christian consist in making fruitful the heritage of Christ, the Incarnate Word, the creative Word incarnate? And let it not be said to us, as by all too many timorous Catholics, that in this world it is sufficient to work out one's own salvation; for it is too easy to retort with the pitiless parable of the talents. The Master of the gifts acknowledges in himself both severity and cupidity; he requires that the talents received from him be at least doubled. Whosoever for fear of God buries his talent to save it, shall lose what he has received, to his profit who has proved the better 'realizer', as that other (or even himself) shall lose his life for having willed to save it. This parable, which I believe Berdyaev fails to cite, is the best Christian—Christological—argument in favour of his thesis.

This philosopher does not like pantheism—or evolutionism. These doctrines consist in willing that destiny be made 'necessary' and automatic, by depriving of their freedom those parts of a whole who escape from the mechanism at the instant that—by grace and beauty—they know in themselves the power, not only to do it, but to love what they are doing: in other words, *men*—those images and resemblances of God. As to the current doctrine of the 'spirituals' and even of the mystics, orthodox or heterodox, those of India more especially, who hold that it is enough that man die to himself to give place to the Beloved, it seems to him, not without reason, incomplete if, as he supposes, the 'union' stops short at the mystical death of the creature, and does not lead to the resurrection of the living finitude thus immolated. Appearances are deceptive (Christ after the Resurrection, was confounded by his lover herself with the gardener); but it is not unjust to treat as incomplete an operation which leaves the Holy Spirit to starve, and does not lead the mystic so far as the recovery, in the form, wellnigh indescribable (Catholics call it the *transforming* union) of a personality, divinized, not annihilated, by his sacrifice. One can well understand that



Berdyaev finds no pleasure in imagining an Omnipotence which creates a world merely to watch it revolving like a perpetual riding-school, in which the living beings have no more to do than die obediently (disappear), and each in his turn. It is not for nothing that God gives you life, Berdyaev would say: it is that you may bear witness that you are his creatures, by becoming creators like himself. He regrets that Christianity has the look of taking for a cipher what man—under God's own eye—can do with his faculties: with his mind, his heart and his hands; as if human creativity had to be justified. It is creativity which justifies itself, which proves that we are (in the words of St Catherine of Genoa) 'gods by *participation*'. And if man receives this power from a God who loves him even as he loves himself, and wills him to be even such as himself, it is simply that all this has been done *for man*, that 'image and resemblance' of God, through Christ. For there has been in God a certain 'pre-eternal human'. It is this which lies at the bottom of the thought of this eccentric but faithful Christian. 'The human is inherent in the second Person of the Holy Trinity', he declares. But of course to him also, even to Berdyaev, comes that unconquerable feeling of astonishment that agonizes us at the sight of the real, palpable man, as we have him before our eyes: even if of correct morality, perhaps of rather slender intelligence and agreeable physique, which is far from being always the case. But Berdyaev's faith has none the less this unconstrained word to say: 'The baseness of empirical man cannot shake my conviction on this subject. I have the *pathos* of humanity, even though I might become more and more persuaded of the little humanity there is in man.'

It is here that Berdyaev leans, and makes us also lean, over the mystery of a gulf which Jacob Boehme, perhaps, had already explored in his way and certainly, before him, the kabbalists; and which the humanists have done their utmost to block up: whatever is most *human* in *man*, it is not man. And it is the 'meaning of the creative act' which teaches it to us and, at the same time, impels man to seek his true self above himself; not in the 'superman' of Nietzsche, which is as fallacious and deceptive as the sub-human of the materialists imposed upon us by the world we live in, with its anthropometric numeration. If it be not in God that you seek yourself, you will never find yourself. Berdyaev repeats it often: he affirms it to us, and his works demonstrate it to satiety: 'God is human, but man is inhuman'.

That is why, beyond the Gospel (which does not show forth all the anthropology that Berdyaev is aware of, but gives it substantially in the Man-God, that is to say in Christ, by holding him more veiled upon his Cross than upon Tabor), the knight-philosopher postulates a supplement of revelation, and would willingly make of it, as others have dreamed before him, from Joachim of Flora to Léon Bloy, that Evangel of the Holy Spirit which would open an age, which the falsifiers parody, and which the catastrophes let loose by the enemies of man (the same as those of God) hold back as much as they can. That would be the age of a new earth and a new heaven. Is it still of time and of our mortal life, that most beautiful of worlds, which the impatience of Berdyaev draws for us in great strokes at the end of his book? There, indeed, we pass from the 'Church of Golgotha' (as he defines our Church) to that transfigured world which the Russians always tend to see beginning at Easter. 'Love is shown in the Church only in symbol, and not in reality, in the liturgy and not in life', writes this pitiless philosopher. But here, he himself treats the Church rather as a symbol of 'objectivization' than as a mystical reality. Those efficacious signs which are our sacraments, if they be sustained by a liturgy, furnish at all times real life to real souls. Moreover, it is not the sacramental life that Berdyaev blames in his criticism of the Orthodox Church or the Roman, it is the sociological forms of religion. When he says: 'The religious centre will be displaced: from the ecclesiastical and conservative sphere, it will pass into the prophetic and creative sphere', we are not so far from the Johannine Apocalypse: 'God will make all things new'. But, with Berdyaev, one does not know very well if the Kingdom of God, called to replace, with our active aid, 'this world', is to be accomplished in time (such as is granted to us), or *post mortem*. He seems vague on this point. But the philosopher is sure, so far as he is concerned, that his intuition does not deceive him: times will come for man, when he will be no more disappointed by all that which Berdyaev abominates and which hinders the Creator's discovery in Man of that pure regard of an image of God, free to create in God that human response which God asks from all eternity, and which can be uttered only by a free will. It is most likely *this*, and the renewal of the Universe which would result from it, that Berdyaev means by that enigmatic 'birth of man in God'.

STANISLAS FUMET.

(Transl. John Trinick.)

## THE ARMENIAN MEKHITARIST MONASTERY IN VIENNA<sup>1</sup>

THE Armenian Benedictine monks, founded by Mekhitar in the eighteenth century, have been divided into two independent congregations since early in their history. When the monks, then all at San Lazzaro, Venice, could not agree about their Constitutions, a party left Venice for Trieste in 1773 and were given some of the buildings of the newly-suppressed Society of Jesus. Though some returned to San Lazzaro, the main community remained independent. In the Napoleonic troubles the monks were deprived of their monastery, and in 1809 were offered a place in Vienna by the Emperor Francis I. In their difficulties they had vowed to our Lady to dedicate their future church to her and to recite the rosary in community every day in her honour. The newcomers to Vienna were greatly helped by St Clement Hofbauer, whom the Viennese already regarded much as they do now, as their own thirteenth apostle; he regularly heard confessions in the Mekhitarists' church to attract the people to them. They soon won that place in the hearts of the Viennese which they have kept ever since, a sign of which is the curious nickname of 'Altgläuber'; unlike the accidentally identical Russian 'Staroviertsy' ('Old believers'), the name shows a true appreciation of the authentic and primitive character of the Mekhitarist monks.

Already in 1811 the monks began their favourite activity of printing and publishing, which has rivalled that of San Lazzaro, with a life of our Lady. This work received new impetus under the great Abbot Aristakes Azarean, who, like most of the abbots-general of both Mekhitarist congregations, was a titular archbishop of an Armenian see *in partibus infidelium*. During his abbacy (1827-55) the monks moved to their present home in the Mechitaristengasse near the Justizpalast. In 1847 began to appear the learned periodical *Hantes Amsorya* (Monthly Review), and the Polyglot Press continued to publish well-edited Armenian texts, liturgical, spiritual and literary. It was in the Viennese monastery that

<sup>1</sup> In the April issue of the *E.C.Q.* for 1940 there is an article by Dom Romanus Rios entitled 'The Armenian Mekhitarist Benedictines'.

This gives a short account of their founder Peter Manuk Mekhitar, but is mainly concerned with their mother-house and Congregation of San Lazzaro, Venice. There is only a slight reference to the Congregation of Vienna. At the commencement of the article there is an excellent Bibliography.—THE EDITOR.

the ancient Armenian language, dead and no longer known, was learned anew and its texts republished. Work such as this has deservedly made both Mekhitarist congregations universally regarded as the centres of authentic Armenian culture and learning.

Several dependent houses were founded as vocations increased; before the last war these were in Constantinople, Greece and Bulgaria, and served schools and parishes. I do not know what has become of these now, nor how many the congregation numbers; in the 1930s it was less than fifty all told, with half-a-dozen professed monks in the Vienna house. Presumably the total is smaller now, though at Vienna I think is about the same.

Under Abbot Azarean's successor, Hakob Bosadjean, the present buildings and, at last, the votive church were completed (1872). Regrettably, the church is not much unlike other modern Viennese churches. Inside it looks entirely Latin except for the curtain which represents the eikonostasis, and this hardly shows except during the liturgy. There are some large paintings of Armenian saints, in an indifferent Western style. One of them shows St Gregory the Illuminator, dressed as an Armenian bishop in the 'latinized' vestments worn since the Middle Ages, converting King Tiridates. The church naturally gives the people what they expect; this is not to say that these monks are 'latinized' in any sense not common to the dissidents, also, for the 'latinization' which took place in the Middle Ages affected the whole Armenian Church. Rather the Mekhitarists are models of the authentic tradition; but in a Latin-rite city it is reasonable that their apostolate should be conformed to the character of the people, so that to the traditional liturgy they add popular services of the Latin type.

In the sacristy an old monk, his head shaved quite bald, showed me vestments and liturgical treasures: gauze-thin veils, exquisitely embroidered by the Armenian nuns in Constantinople, gorgeous brocaded vestments stiff with gems, the tall mitres and pastoral staff of the archbishop-abbot (he had recently—in 1954—helped at the mass confirmation of 11,000 in St Stephen's), and the crowns and staffs of the *Vardapets* (the special Armenian sacred order of 'Doctors') whose insignia are those of a Byzantine bishop. We went on to see the refectory, on end of which is wholly occupied by a huge western-style painting of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, while along the walls are old prints of the unique tiny churches of old Armenia, many of them now destroyed

## Armenian Mekhitarist Monastery in Vienna 281

by the Turks. My guide told me in his beautiful German, spoken with cultured preciseness and a most attractive intonation, how he himself was born in Armenia, and what a lovely country it is. He had revisited his home, now in the Soviet Union, in 1924 for two years, till he was driven out. During the last war he had been put in a concentration camp in Bulgaria, but had somehow outwitted the Russians and regained his freedom.

Up in the library I saw treasures which deserved a longer stay than was possible; in particular, the collection of ancient Armenian coins, which is the finest in the world. My guide was the curator of the collection and spoke like an expert numismatist. Passing necessarily by cases of precious manuscripts, I saw exhibited many specimens of the Polyglot Press's work, admirable both for the beauty of the printing and for the number of languages represented. Finally, we visited the Press itself, housed in the cramped and damaged quarters left after the allied bombing had destroyed part of the former building. The press is mostly old-fashioned in its methods, but there are two linotype machines for Armenian type. Of the two operators one, the younger, learnt Armenian so as to understand what he was setting up, but the other, an old man, never fancied doing so, and sets perfectly without understanding a word. To one who in his simplicity finds all the letters of the Armenian alphabet like so many runs in a cricket scoring-book, this achievement seemed incredible. As we came out I saw another indication of how homely a place these monks have won in Vienna; not far from the linotype machines at their extraordinary work, a compositor was setting up the Vienna Butchers' Weekly!

Two remarks of my kind guide have stuck in my mind. First, when he spoke of their coming to Vienna: 'We are so grateful to the Hapsburgs, they did so much for us'. He said this so simply and sincerely that the Emperor Francis might have brought them there only the week before. Such a sentiment might seem like a voice from the past, so out of fashion is it; but that would not worry these devoted monks with their amazingly actual sense of history. The other remark is more surprising, but springs from the same character. Of Soviet Armenia he said: 'Whatever the communists have done, they have given the Armenians a home and a centre'. One may wonder whether this would be echoed in the 'Armenian Republic', but this speaker himself could have no illusions about the Soviet state. He was simply speaking as



an Armenian Christian with 2,500 years of tragic history behind him. They if anyone have reason to know that they are 'pilgrims and strangers on the earth', and it seemed to me characteristic of this spirit to find something to be grateful for even in an atheist state.

ROBERT MURRAY, S.J.

NOTE.—The historical details in this article are taken from the 'Statistica' of the Oriental Congregation, 1932. If any reader has better information to correct any statements or guesses, this will be very welcome.

It may also be of interest to some that the Vienna Mekhitarists publish a good cheap text of the Armenian liturgy in German.

## RITES AND CEREMONIES OF THE COPTIC CHURCH

### PART X

(Continued from *E.C.Q.*, Winter 1955-56)

THIS present and final article on the Rites and Ceremonies of the Coptic Church contains a description and synopsis of (a) the Order of the Procession on the two feasts of the Holy Cross, on Palm Sunday, on Easter Sunday, in Paschaltide, on Ascension Day, on the Sunday after Ascension Day, and on Whit-Sunday, (b) the principal services of Holy Week, (c) the Office of Genuflection on Whit-Sunday.

With regard to the form of a procession in the Coptic Church, three circuits are made round the sanctuary, three round the church itself, and one circuit round the altar, *i.e.* seven circuits in all, and here it may be mentioned that the numbers three and seven were held as sacred in the Ancient World.<sup>1</sup> In these processions there are carried eikons, crosses, gospels, hexapteryga,<sup>2</sup> candles and censers with incense. On Palm Sunday the palms which are carried in the procession, or which are held by the congregation, are not formally blessed, as in the Latin Church, nor is there a prayer read over them, as in the Greek Church; but everyone brings his own palm to the church.

For the Services of Holy Week, the description and synopsis has been made from the text of the *Guide and Order of the Week*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford 1949, under 'Numbers, Sacred', p. 614.

<sup>2</sup> Metal fans in the shape of heads and wings of the Cherubim.

## Rites and Ceremonies of the Coptic Church 283

of the *Sufferings and the Glorious Feast of the Pascha*<sup>3</sup> in conjunction with the Lectionary for Holy Week.<sup>4</sup> In Holy Week each day has five Canonical Hours of the eve, namely, the 1st, 3rd, 6th, 9th and 11th Hour, and five Canonical Hours of the day itself, namely, the Morning Prayer, the 3rd, 6th, 9th and 11th Hour. It must not be forgotten, moreover, that, in the East, the day is reckoned as from sunset to sunset; Sunday, for example, starts from sunset on Saturday and ends at sunset on Sunday. There is, therefore, no such thing as Second Vespers, as in the Latin Church, though even there the rubrics often require at Second Vespers a commemoration of the feast of the ensuing day.

All the Canonical Hours of Holy Week are performed in the western choir which now through the removal of the choir screen, can scarcely be distinguished from the nave. The reason given for this practice are the words in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter xiii, verses 12-13: 'Jesus also . . . suffered without the gate. Let us therefore go forth to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.' These Canonical Hours consist of Lessons from the Old Testament, a Psalm-Versicle, a Gospel, hymns and intercessions and, with the exception of the 6th, 9th and 12th Hour of Good Friday, no incense is used at any of them.

As prayers for the dead with the offering of incense are not allowed to be recited from the Monday of Holy Week until the Morning Offering of Incense on Holy Saturday<sup>5</sup>—the Church being entirely absorbed in mourning the sufferings and death of her Founder—a special Office for the Dead is performed at the end of the Divine Liturgy on Palm Sunday.

On Maundy Thursday the Morning Offering of Incense is performed, and after the 9th Hour there takes place the Service of Foot-washing<sup>6</sup> which is followed by the Divine Liturgy.

On Good Friday, at both the 6th and the 9th Hour, there is a solemn incensing by all the priests present, of the eikon of the Crucifixion which has been set up in the western choir with lighted candles before it. At the 6th Hour, when the

<sup>3</sup> *Kitāb Dallāl wa Tartīb Gum'at al-Aldm wa 'Id al-Fiṣḥ al-Magīd*, Cairo, 1920.

<sup>4</sup> *Kitāb al-Bashkat al-Muqaddasah*, Cairo, 1921.

<sup>5</sup> In the Latin Church also Requiem Masses are not allowed to be celebrated in Holy Week.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *E.C.Q.*, Vol. IX, pp. 311-14.

reader of the Arabic version of the Gospel according to St Matthew, chapter xxvii, verses 27-45, reaches the words 'And from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour', all the candles and lights in the church, except the candle at the lectern, are extinguished, and are not relighted until the beginning of the 9th Hour. At the 12th Hour there is a procession at which there is carried the eikon of the Crucifixion, and at the end of this Hour there is performed the ceremonial interment on the altar of an eikon of the Burial of Christ.

On the Eve of Holy Saturday, there takes place the reading of the Odes and Prayers of the Old and the New Testaments, and on Holy Saturday morning there is performed the Morning Offering of Incense which is followed by the 3rd and 6th Hour. Then there takes place the ceremonial reading of the entire Book of the Apocalypse, and this is followed by the 9th Hour, after which the Divine Liturgy is celebrated. On this day the rubrics direct the priest to take great care that the administration of the Holy Communion is finished before sunset, as otherwise there will be two distributions of the Holy Communion on the same day, and this is not allowed at the Feast of Easter.

In the evening of Holy Saturday there is read the entire Gospel according to St John, and after this there is performed the Midnight Hour of Easter Sunday which is followed by the Morning Offering of Incense and the Divine Liturgy.

At the end of the reading of the Arabic version of the Lesson from the Acts of the Apostles at the Divine Liturgy, there takes place the ceremonial opening of the door of the sanctuary and the procession with the eikon of the Resurrection, at which there is sung the Greek Hymn 'Christ is risen, etc.' In the evening of Easter Sunday there is a service at which the procession with the eikon of the Resurrection is repeated. This Evening Service may be compared to the Vespers of Easter Sunday in the Greek Church, known as Δευτέρα Ἀνάστασις.

In the evening of the Saturday preceding Whit-Sunday there is performed the Service of Genuflection, at which the practice of kneeling is again resumed, since during Paschaltide none should kneel, as this is a time of rejoicing. The description and synopsis of this service has been made from the *Book of the Lekanê and the Adoration*.<sup>7</sup> A similar service is also performed

<sup>7</sup> *Kitâb al-Laḡân wa 's-Sagadah*, Cairo, 1921, pp. 228-326.

## Rites and Ceremonies of the Coptic Church 285

in the Greek Church at the Vespers which follow immediately the Divine Liturgy on Whit-Sunday.<sup>8</sup> This Service of Genuflection comprises three distinct parts. At the beginning of the first and second parts which are performed in the western choir, the priest offers incense for the repose and refreshment of the souls of the dead. According to an ancient belief, the souls of the dead enjoy their freedom during Paschaltide, but have to return to their allotted place in the Next World at the end of this period. In the third part, the priest enters the sanctuary and performs the Evening Offering of Incense which, however, on this day has special features. At the end of each of the three parts of this Service of Genuflection there are said solemn prayers during which the congregation kneels. These prayers are more or less the same as the solemn prayers recited kneeling at the Second Vespers of Whit-Sunday in the Greek Church.

Words printed in italics in the text given in the following synopses represent Greek words which occur in the Coptic text. All quotations from the Old Testament are according to the Septuagint Version<sup>9</sup> from which the Coptic Version is derived.

O. H. E. HADJI-BURMESTER.

*Chatby-les-Bains,  
Alexandria.*

*Eve of the Feast of the Falling-Asleep of the Holy Virgin Mary,  
14th August 1955.*

### THE ORDER OF THE PROCESSION ON THE FEAST OF THE CROSS ON THE 17TH OF TUT<sup>10</sup> AND THE 10TH OF BARAMHAT<sup>11</sup> AND ON PALM SUNDAY<sup>12</sup>

The Order here set out is that indicated in the *Kitâb Dawrat 'Idat as-Ṣalīb wa 'sh-Sha'ânin wa Turûḥât as-Ṣawm al-Kabîr wa 'l-Khamisîn* (Book of the Procession on the two Feasts of the Cross and on Palm Sunday, and the Turûḥât of the Great Fast and of Paschaltide), Cairo 1921, pp. 3-51. It should be noted, however, that in addition to this, there are special Orders, for example, those in use by the Churches of SS. Sergius and

<sup>8</sup> For a comparative study between the Office of Genuflection in the Coptic and the Greek Church, cf. O. H. E. KHS-Burmester, 'The Office of Genuflection on Whit-Sunday' in *Le Muséon*, t. XLVII, pp. 205-57.

<sup>9</sup> H. B. Swete, *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint*, Cambridge 1901-12.

<sup>10</sup> i.e. 27th September.

<sup>11</sup> i.e. 18th April.

<sup>12</sup> See also page 282.

Bacchus and of the Holy Virgin Mary (al-Mu'allaqah) in Old Cairo,<sup>13</sup> and by the Monastery of St Macarius in the Wādī 'n-Naṭrūn,<sup>14</sup> and by some churches in Upper Egypt.

This procession replaces that part of the Morning Offering of Incense which precedes the Psalm-Versicle which is sung before the reading of the Gospel. In this procession one or three candles are carried as well as a censer. If the priest wears any vestment, then it is the epitrachelion. On Palm Sunday palm branches are carried in this procession. The leaflets of these branches are skilfully plaited so as to form various shapes. The centre of this shape is decorated with flowers, and on the right side there is plaited a kind of receptacle to hold the prosphora-loaf. These loaves are sold at the door of the church.

Lifting up the cross, the priest says: 'God, have mercy upon us, etc.' and the singers intone thrice *Kyrie eleison* to the accompaniment of cymbals. Then they sing the Laḥn<sup>15</sup> of the Cross: 'The eirenic letters of Constantine were brought to Rakoti (Alexandria), saying: Close the door of the temples; open the door of the church'. Then the Paralex[is]<sup>16</sup>: 'The bishops heard and rejoiced, etc.' Then the Ṭarḥ<sup>17</sup>: 'Helena the queen longed to see the holy wood of the Cross, etc.' If it be Palm Sunday, they shall sing this Laḥn before the procession of the Cross: 'Blessed is He Who cometh in the Name of the Lord, etc.' and this verse before the Ṭarḥ: 'Hosanna in the highest, etc.', and then the Ṭarḥ: 'Go up upon a high mountain, thou who bringest glad tidings to Sion, etc.'<sup>18</sup> Then the singers respond at the procession, if it be a Feast of the Cross, with this verse: 'Through His Cross and His holy Resurrection, etc.', but, if it be Palm Sunday, they respond with this verse: 'Hosanna in the highest, etc.'

1st Station before the central sanctuary. The priest shall say the Prayer of the Gospel,<sup>19</sup> and there shall be sung the Psalm-

<sup>13</sup> For a description of these two churches, cf. O. H. E. KHS-Burmester, *A Guide to the Ancient Coptic Churches of Cairo*, Cairo, 1955, pp. 18-31.

<sup>14</sup> For a description of this Monastery, cf. O. H. E. KHS-Burmester, *A Guide to the Monasteries of the Wādī 'n-Naṭrūn*, Cairo, 1954, pp. 28-40.

<sup>15</sup> Laḥn = Tone, cf. L. Villecourt, 'Les Observances Liturgiques et la Discipline du Jeûne dans l'Eglise Copte' in *Le Muséon*, t. xxxvi, p. 264.

<sup>16</sup> The name given to the hymn which follows the Response (Laḥn), in Coptic Ouōhem.

<sup>17</sup> For an explication of the term Ṭarḥ (plural Ṭurḥât), cf. O. H. E. KHS-Burmester, 'The Ṭurḥât of the Coptic Church' in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, Vol. III, p. 78.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *Isaiah* xl, 9. For a study of the Sa'idic and Bohairic versions of this Ṭarḥ, cf. O. H. E. KHS-Burmester, 'The Ṭurḥât of the Coptic Church' in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, Vol. III, pp. 81-2.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *E.C.Q.*, Vol. VII, p. 394.



## Rites and Ceremonies of the Coptic Church 287

Versicle : *Ps.* ciii, 4; cxxxvii, 1\*-2\* + Alleluia. Then the Gospel is read : *John* i, 43-51, and the Response of the Gospel shall be sung : 'Four *Bodiless Creatures* bear up the *chariot* of God, etc.' Then 'Through His *Cross*, etc.' on the Feasts of the Cross, or 'Hosanna in the highest, etc.' on Palm Sunday.<sup>20</sup>

2nd Station before the eikon of the Holy Virgin Mary. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle : *Ps.* lxxxvi, 3, 5\*, 7 + Alleluia, the Gospel : *Luke* i, 39-56, and the Response of the Gospel : 'Rightly we exalt thee with Elizabeth thy *consin*, etc.'

3rd Station before the eikon of the Angel Gabriel. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle : *Ps.* xxxiii, 8-9 + Alleluia, the Gospel : *Luke* i, 26-38, and the Response of the Gospel : 'Daniel saw Gabriel the *Angel*, etc.'

4th Station before the eikon of the Angel Michael. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle : *Ps.* cii, 20\*, 21 + Alleluia, the Gospel : *Matthew* xiii, 44-52, and the Response of the Gospel : 'Michael the *chief* of the heavenly beings, etc.'

5th Station before the eikon of St Mark. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle : *Ps.* lxvii, 12-13 + Alleluia, the Gospel : *Luke* x, 1-12, and the Response of the Gospel : 'Mark the *Apostle* and the *Evangelist*, the witness, etc.'

6th Station before the eikon of the Apostles. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle : *Ps.* xviii, 4\*-5 + Alleluia, the Gospel : *Matthew* x, 1-8, and the Response of the Gospel : 'Jesus Christ sent you, O Twelve *Apostles*, etc.'

7th Station before the eikon of St George the Martyr, or of another martyr. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle : *Ps.* xcvi, 11-12 + Alleluia, the Gospel : *Luke* xxi, 12-19, and the Response of the Gospel : 'St George completed seven years, etc.'

8th Station before the eikon of St Antony, or of another saint. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle : *Ps.* lxvii, 36\*, 4 + Alleluia, the Gospel : *Matthew* xvi, 24-28, and the Response of the Gospel : 'Remove from your hearts the thoughts of evil, etc.'

9th Station before the north door. The procession proceeds westwards till it reaches the north door. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle : *Ps.* lxxxiii, 2-3\* + Alleluia, the Gospel : *Luke* xiii, 22-30 and the Response of the

<sup>20</sup> The one or the other of these verses, according to whether it be a Feast of the Cross, or Palm Sunday, is repeated after the Response of the Gospel which follows each of the twelve Gospels.

Gospel: 'When Thou comest at Thy Second *Parousia*, etc.'

10th Station before the Lekanê Tank.<sup>21</sup> The procession proceeds westwards till it faces the Lekanê Tank. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle: *Ps.* xxviii, 3-4\* + Alleluia, the Gospel: *Matthew* iii, 13-17, and the Response of the Gospel: 'John bare witness in the Fourth Gospel, saying: I baptized my *Saviour*, etc.'

11th Station before the south door. The procession then proceeds to the south door. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle: *Ps.* cxvii, 19-20 + Alleluia, the Gospel: *Matthew* xxi, 1-11, and the Response of the Gospel: 'He Who sitteth upon the Cherubim, etc.'

12th Station before the eikon of St John the Baptist, the Precursor. There is said the Prayer of the Gospel, the Psalm-Versicle: *Ps.* li, 10\*, 11\* + Alleluia, the Gospel: *Luke* vii, 28-35, and the Response of the Gospel: 'There hath not arisen among those born of women, etc.'

Then the procession enters the sanctuary and goes thrice round the altar, and coming out again, it proceeds thrice round the church, and entering the sanctuary again, it goes once round the altar, and then comes out of the sanctuary. The priest now says the Prayer of the Gospel, and there is said the Psalm-Versicle and the Gospel of the Morning Offering of Incense. After this, the service proceeds in the usual manner.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *E.C.Q.*, Vol. VII, p. 381.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor of *E.C.Q.*

MY DEAR FATHER,

In Mr Trinick's otherwise admirable review of Fr John Ryder's *Eastern Rite Prayers to the Mother of God*, there is one passage which could well convey to the unwary reader an inaccurate picture of the devotions in question. Mr Trinick emphasizes the 'intense and insistent dwelling of Eastern devotion upon' our Lady's virginity. Of course, it does so dwell—how could it do otherwise?—but, surely, the *really* significant note in Eastern Marian devotion, particularly when it is compared with much of its (dare one say it?) pretty-pretty paste-and-water modern Western counterpart is its 'intense and insistent dwelling' on the *Divine Motherhood* of our Lady. It is not our Lady's *virginity*, alone, that is, in Mr Trinick's phrase, 'the most characteristic and pre-eminent of all her attributes', but her *virgin-motherhood*. In the words of Fr Vassall-Phillips, 'It is a unique wonder. In Mary alone we believe that motherhood was joined to virginity, and that virginity was fruitful.' That is what the Eastern devotions express to perfection—witness such a simple thing as the very title of the volume under review; and what modern Western devotions all too often fail to express.

Yours etc.,

WILLIAM GRISBROOKE.

(Mr Trinick writes: 'It is a little difficult to see the precise ground for Mr Grisbrooke's objection. If my words be given their full value, *while allowed to remain in their context*, it will be observed, I think, that, in insisting upon the pre-eminence of the virginal status as "*the indispensable condition*" of our Lady's "divine maternity", I am merely "calling a spade a spade". Without this pre-requisite, this pre-existing condition, she could not have become Mother of God; and the Church has underlined this pre-eminence of her virginal status by proclaiming her *perpetual* virginity; *post*, as well as *ante*, *partum*. The citation from Fr Vassall-Phillips seems to strike a somewhat halting note: as if virginity were to be regarded as "fruitful" only when eventuating in motherhood; whereas virginity is already fruitful *per se*. It was for this reason, because virginity is self-sufficient and an 'end in itself', that a virgin was elected to become the Mother of God.'—JOHN TRINICK.)

## NEWS AND COMMENTS

## SACRA CONGREGATIO 'PRO ECCLESIA ORIENTALI', ROME

In our last issue we published the very kind and sympathetic letter from the eminent secretary of the above Congregation, His Eminence Cardinal Tisserant. For this letter we are most grateful and we make this an opportunity to urge our readers both to help in every possible way to increase the circulation of the *E.C.Q.* and, if they are able, to send us additional sums of money so that a stable income can be built up. In this way the *E.C.Q.* will be able to meet its increased expenses due to the present publication costs.—THE EDITOR.

\* \* \*

## THE GREEK ORTHODOX HOLY CROSS MISSIONARY SOCIETY

As a result of a talk by their dean, Bishop Athenagoras, at Holy Cross Orthodox Theological School, Brookline, Mass., on the rôle played by the Church of Byzantium in missionary work, the student body organized the beginning of the Greek Orthodox Holy Cross Missionary Society.

'Among the initial steps in actual missionary work', we are told, 'is planned the aiding of Orthodox missions in Korea, the Philippines and Uganda in Africa.' Two Korean boys will be given full scholarship in the theological school.

Their missionary effort has been blessed by His Beatitude the Œcumenical Patriarch and Michael the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of North and South America.

This is a very interesting move.

\* \* \*

The visit to England of Vazgen I, supreme catholicos of the Armenian Church, should arouse some interest, if only of curiosity, in the minds of English Catholics for this ancient Eastern Church.

The catholicos is the head of the national Church at present separated from the Holy See. But by a happy coincidence there was a Catholic Armenian bishop visiting Westminster Cathedral at the same time. He was Mgr John Baptist Apcar, the ordinary of some 3,000 Catholics of the Armenian rite dispersed all over Persia, with his see at Ispahan.

It is for this reason we publish a paper read by Mr Walter Kolarz at the *E.C.Q.* Study Circle at the end of 1955. There is also an article in *The Tablet* (14th April 1956), 'Another Soviet Visitor' by Dr M. A. Doughty, which principally deals with the Armenian catholicos, whereas Mr Kolarz discusses the problem as a whole.

We also give a short account of the famous Catholic Armenian Monastery in Vienna by one who visited it.

All this will give a general picture of Christianity among the Armenians.

HEGOUMENOS JACOB MUYSER

We call special attention to the Obituary notice of this Catholic scholar of the Coptic rite as an example of the sort of work towards reunion that can be done by Catholics of Eastern rites. This is in every way to be praised as is the fact that the notice has been written by a deacon of the Orthodox Coptic Church.

\* \* \*

#### CATHOLICS OF THE MALABAR RITE

We think this extract from the following letter should have as great a publicity as possible. We print this with kind permission of *The Catholic Herald* in which it was first published (4th May 1956). It has a definite bearing on our 'Indian Comments' in *E.C.Q.*, Autumn 1952, p. 366.

#### IN SOUTH INDIA

SIR,

It is a source of pleasure to read your correspondents' letters on the Indian approach. I was several years in India and it has been very puzzling to see that the Rites of South India are treated by many Catholics as something very strange just because the language of the liturgy is not *Latin*.

Moreover, the great efforts to *Latinize* these rites, though they were in Communion with Rome, proved not only very harmful but even caused a schism.

Yearly, certain Religious Congregations from the North of India send down a recruiting priest to Malabar and scores of young Malabar boys are taken up to the various *Aspirantates* of these Latin rite Religious Congregations in the north. Before these boys enter the novitiate they have to apply formally to Rome to change their rite. To me this seems one of the factors which has so far hindered the conversion of India. So far I have been informed, only the Society of Jesus with over four centuries of experience in India has allowed her Malabar members to keep their own rite. I do not speak of the Carmelites of Malabar who are very strong, and have a Province of their own, their own superiors and all of the Malabar rite. If other communities want Malabar vocations they should allow them to retain their rite too.

BELGIAN SUBSCRIBER.

\* \* \*

'THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA AND THE CHURCH' BY REV. DONALD REA.

This is a most interesting comment on the C.S.I. It is written from a definite Catholic angle. Fr Henry St John, O.P., will review it in the next issue.



## OBITUARY

HEGOUMENOS JACOB MUYSER 1896-1956

*'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'*

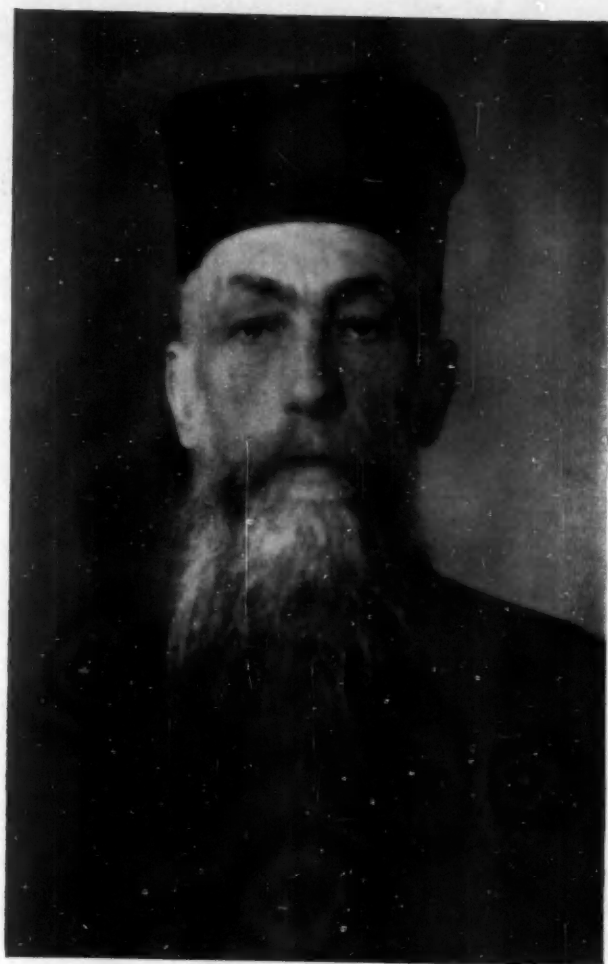
Hegoumenos Jacob Muiser will truly merit this blessing, for he did not live unto himself, but unto the Lord, and he died unto the Lord!

Born of parents of good family at the Hague, Holland, on 9th May 1896, Jacob Muiser received his primary and secondary education at the school and college of the Society of Jesus in this city.

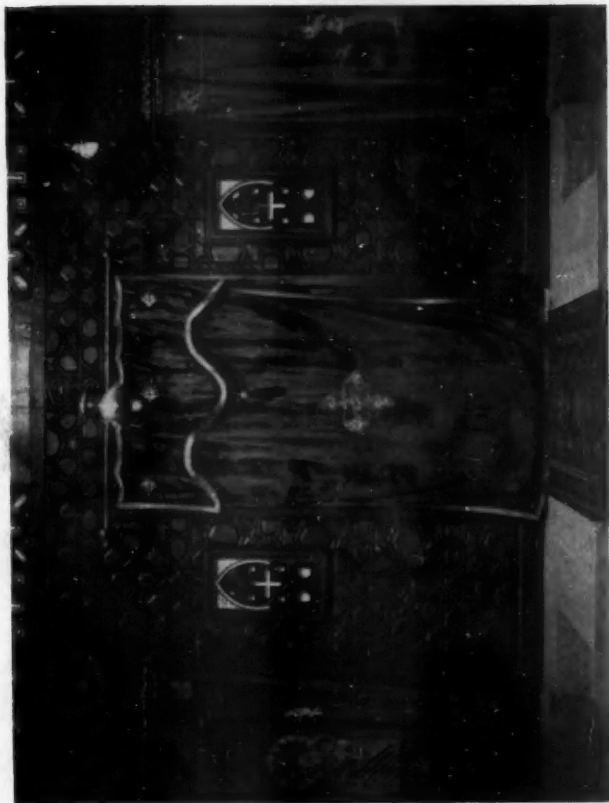
At the age of eighteen, he went to Switzerland, where he entered the Theological Faculty of the University of Friburg, in which he also pursued a course of studies in the Department of Oriental Languages. In addition to the Semitic languages, he studied Coptic also, as his main subject, under the late Prof. Eugène Dévaud of whom he always spoke with gratitude and appreciation. After a course of six years' study in both departments, he obtained his university degree.

On 20th February 1920 Abuna Jacob Muiser was ordained priest at the age of 24 years. Inclined to the ascetic life, he entered together with a group of eight of his college comrades, the *Congrégation de la Mission des Pères Africains*. After his ordination, he was sent by his *Congrégation* to Egypt, where he remained until shortly before his death.

Abuna Jacob Muiser at once decided to devote himself to the service of the Coptic Church, and to this end he continued his study of Arabic with which he became thoroughly conversant, and in which he wrote many interesting articles. Besides Arabic, he continued his studies of Coptic, and thanks to his extensive knowledge of these two languages, he was able with ease to examine most of the Coptic and Christian Arabic Manuscripts in Egypt and in the libraries of Europe. From these he extracted many important notes on the rites and the history of the Coptic Church. He also acquired a good collection of photographs of Coptic and Christian Arabic manuscripts to which he was not able to have direct access. In these two languages he became such an authority, that his colleagues used to call him the 'Coptic Encyclopædia'. His reference library was that of the Coptic Museum in Old Cairo, and on the days when he was there, he was always the centre of a group of serious Coptic students on whom he bestowed the fruits of his deep and many-sided knowledge. The writer of this obituary notice himself owes a great debt



HEGOUMENOS JACOB MUISER 1896—1956



HAIKAL SCREEN OF WOODWORK OF ST PACHOMIUS CHURCH AT FAGUS  
WINDOWS ARE CLOSED, CURTAINS DRAWN

to Abuna Jacob Muyser's sound guidance and valuable help in all his researches in Coptology.

When Jacob Muyser came to Egypt, he established himself at Faqus, a Markaz in the Sharqia Province, where he determined to build a church in the pure Coptic style of architecture. This church he dedicated to St. Pachomius, his patron saint of whom he boasted that he was one of his monks and, indeed, he was a pure Coptic monk in all respects, being similar in his manner of life to the saintly fathers of early Egyptian Monasticism.

At Faqus he founded two schools, one St Pachomius' School for boys, and the other, St Catherine's School for girls. In addition to this, he established there a branch of the Society of St Vincent de Paul for aiding poor families.

Jacob Muyser was a friend of all Egyptians, and he had close and good relations with the Christians of all sects. He was beloved by all by reason of his distinguished personality, his piety and his learning. He was most zealous for the Coptic rite which he considered to be the best of all the rites, and ultimately he convinced the Coptic Uniate Church to observe and to practise the pure Coptic rite. On 8th July 1945 he was ordained hegoumenos (Qummus) at Faqus, according to the Coptic rite.

In the August of 1955 he left for Vienna to attend the Congress of Coptic Papyrologists which was being held in that city. The following month he went to Rome, where, however, he fell ill, though he expressed in a letter to the writer the hope that he would be able to return in October or November to Egypt, his second native land. Towards the end of December 1955, a letter from the Père Simon of the Biblical Institute, Rome, informed the writer that Hegoumenos Jacob Muyser's illness was very grave. In spite of all the efforts of the most eminent physicians in Rome, the pulmonary cancer from which he was suffering could not be arrested, and at dawn on 16th April 1956, Hegoumenos Jacob Muyser passed away to his rest.

Besides the many interesting articles on the Coptic rite and the history of the Coptic Church which he published in periodicals in Arabic and French in both Egypt and Europe, Hegoumenos Jacob Muyser's outstanding works are: *Her belig offer in den koptischen ritus volgens den H. Basilius den Groote*, 2d, ed. Nijmegen, 1928 and *Maria's heerlijkheid in Egypte; een studie der koptische Marialiteratuur*, 2 vols, Louvain, 1935.

Jacob Muyser's death is an irreparable loss to scholarship, for he was an outstanding authority on the rites and the history of the Coptic Church, a field in which there are not many workers.

'Blessed art thou, Fr Jacob, for thou didst carry the Cross from thy childhood and didst follow thy Lord, observing the austere laws of Egyptian Monasticism. Thou, O Saintly Father, hast fought the good fight, and hast finished thy course; thou hast kept the Faith and there is laid up for thee a crown of righteousness. Thou hast heard the gracious voice, saying joyfully: "Come, thou blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world. O faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Pray to God for us, O Saintly Fr Jacob, that He may forgive us our sins. Amen.'

On 15th June 1956 a Requiem Liturgy was celebrated for the soul of Hegoumenos Jacob Muyser by the Rev. Hegoumenos George Pistauros in the Coptic Orthodox Church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus (Abû Sarga) in Old Cairo.

YASSA 'ABD AL-MASIH,

(Librarian of the Coptic Museum, Old Cairo, and a Deacon of the Coptic Orthodox Church.)

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

*Le Sainte et Divine Liturgie de Saint Jean Chrysostome, selon le rite Byzantin.* (École Professionnelle des Frères, Alexandrie, Egypte.) 6 x 4 inches. Pp. 48. Paper cover. Obtainable from Le Père Vicaire, Patriarcat Grec-Catholique, Rue Tawil, Alexandrie, Egypte. Price 2s. post free.

As the divine liturgy is normally celebrated in the Arabic language in the Syrian-Byzantine Church, by the Melkites (Uniates) and the Orthodox alike—Greek being reserved for special occasions or for local requirements—this new edition of the text of the divine liturgy of St John Chrysostom in Arabic together with a translation in French, will be particularly useful to those who are not thoroughly conversant with literary Arabic.

The audible parts of the divine liturgy are given in Arabic and French in parallel columns. The responses and the parts assigned to the choir are printed in red. The prayers said



inaudibly by the priest, as well as the rubrics are given in French only. The principal acts of the divine liturgy are illustrated by small pictures.

As this edition is destined for the use of the Melkites, the creed, in Arabic only, contains the addition 'Filioque', and the pope of Rome is mentioned together with the patriarch in the prayer of commemoration of ecclesiastical authorities which follows the epiclesis.

With reference to the epiclesis, the editors would have done wisely to have followed Dom Placide De Meester's<sup>1</sup> translation and also that in the *Petit Missel Byzantin*<sup>2</sup> for the rubric which precedes the epiclesis, and to have used 'le Saint Pain' instead of their 'Pain consacré'. From the context the use of the word 'consacré' is illogical, and it merely strikes a discordant note in Eastern tradition.

The general arrangement of this modest booklet and the clear printing of the Arabic and French texts deserve all praise. All those who are interested in the divine liturgy of St John Chrysostom in its Arabic dress should certainly possess a copy.

O.H.E.KHS-B.

*The Meaning of the Monastic Life* by Louis Bouyer. Pp. 209 (Burns Oates) 21s.

This book is a critical analysis of the monastic life, and in the process the author compares Western monasticism with the East, and at that, by the standard of the Eastern *laura*.

It may come as a surprise that any attempt should be made to find a similarity between a Benedictine and an Eastern monk. Yet the rule of St Benedict is a mosaic of quotations from and allusions to the monastic traditions of the East. The life lived by St Benedict and his disciples at Subiaco must have been very much that of the *Laura*; there are plenty of references in the rule and in the *Life* to this form of monastic asceticism.

Fr Bouyer in this book gives us just what we want along these lines. As far as we know this has not been done in English by anyone before.

If this is simply to be considered as an ideal and left at that we should consider this an important comment on monastic

<sup>1</sup> Dom Placide De Meester, *La Divine Liturgy de notre Père S. Jean Chrysostome*, Rome, 1925, pp. 74-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Petit Missel Byzantin* issued by the Patriarcat Grec-Catholique d'Alexandrie, 1951, p. 45.

life. But this is given as St Benedict's application of the Eastern traditions to the West and here we think Fr Bouyer is wrong. St Benedict at Subiaco led a life after the manner of St Antony, the hermit, and he left the life of a hermit open to his monks, but the final expression of his mind as written down in his rule looked to St Basil (whom he calls his Father) for inspiration.

St Basil was a bishop, his monasteries went in for large scale hospitality and also for hospitals, they were centres of culture. This of course was soon to be true of Benedictine houses all over Europe, the ideal of the *Laura* faded out. This is not to deny that the traditional monastic life was practised here, there was little to choose in these early centuries between East and West, the change came in the West later.

We must thank Fr Bouyer very much for this book, it needs to be read, however, with Cardinal Newman's sketches on Benedictine history.

DOM BEDE WINSLOW.

*The Waters of Marah. The Present State of the Greek Church* by Peter Hammond. (Rockliff Press) 21s.

Present events in Cyprus are a constant reminder of how little we in England know and understand of Greece and the Greek Church. If for no other reason, we should be glad of the publication of this book on the present state of that Church, which will do much to destroy misconceptions about Greek Christianity. Mr Hammond writes of his subject with enthusiasm, and if his account sometimes lacks the balance which we should expect in a more dispassionate study, his love for Greece and its people has allowed him to penetrate many mysteries which would not have been open to the impartial observer.

But this book is not simply the work of an enthusiast. It contains a great deal of information about Church life in Greece which is not otherwise available in English. It gives a vivid picture of the work of the 'movements', pre-eminent among them Zoë, which have played so important and creative a rôle in religious life during the last fifty years. What is perhaps even more interesting is the description of the life of the rural dioceses of Northern Greece, and of the work of the village clergy. The author writes of the days of the civil war with the communists, when the sufferings of the Church brought out all that was noblest in the Christian character of the Greek people. Through persecution and bitter poverty

the authentic qualities of the Church shone through; the body sharing in the sufferings of its Head; the bitter waters of Marah becoming sweet to the people of God, through the presence of the cross. That is the author's vision, and if it is incomplete, it is none the less profound and living. It gives us an insight into its subject such as no other book gives.

Mr Hammond has written as an Anglican, who believes that in the rediscovery of the Orthodox Church lies the true hope of Christian unity in the West. All who are convinced of the importance of improved understanding between Eastern and Western Christendom, whether they share this point of view or not, will find this an absorbing and valuable book.

A. M. ALLCHIN.

*Nostalgia for Orthodoxy* (Η Νostalγια της Ορθοδοξίας) by the Brotherhood of 'Zoe'. Pp. 152 (Athens 1956).

This book is an unusual by-product of the œcumenical movement. It sets out to record the interest in and appreciation of Orthodoxy of Protestant, Roman Catholic and Anglican scholars and œcumenical students. The material is accurate and well documented and, within the limits of brevity, comprehensive.

The work of the Benedictines of Chevetogne, the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association and the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius is mentioned with approval, and there are many references to journals, including the *E.C.Q.* and to names of individual writers who have paid tribute to the witness of Orthodoxy, beginning with John R. Mott.

It would seem that the purpose of the book is to draw the attention of Orthodox to the treasures which others find in their tradition, notably in the Divine Liturgy and in the strong patristic current flowing through Orthodox teaching. In this respect the book is curiously self-conscious and reflects the very real isolation which still exists between Orthodoxy and the West. Possibly one effect of the book will be to awaken among Greek readers a keener desire to break through the historical and cultural obstacles of the past in order to meet Western Christians at a deeper theological level than is at present generally possible.

The Brotherhood of 'Zoë' has hitherto eschewed direct œcumenical contacts and this publication may perhaps open the way for a more active concern in this field.

HELLE GEORGIADIS.

*New English Ritual and Sacrament Pamphlets.* The Liturgical Press, St John's Abbey, Collegeville, Min., U.S.A.

These are most excellent publications. The pamphlets deal with, Baptism, Marriage, Rites for the sick and dying, the funeral Mass and Burial. They are well produced. If bought in bulk there is a discount. They can be had at Duckett's.

### BOOKS RECEIVED

Cambridge University Press : *Codex Climaci Rescriptus Graecus*, edited by Ian Moir.

Heidelberg : *Russische Religions Philosophen*, Nicolai von Bubnoff.

Oliver and Boyd : *Kingdom and Church*, T. F. Torrance.

Longmans Green : *Principles of Sacramental Theology*, Bernard Leeming, s.j.

S.P.C.K. : *St Basil the Great and Apollinaris of Laodicea*, G. L. Prestige.

Baxter, Oxford. *The Church of South India and the Church*, Donald Rea.

The Liturgical Press, Collegeville : *New English Ritual and Sacrament Pamphlets*.

Burns Oates. *Anglican Orders*, A. A. Stephenson, s.j.

We specialize in books on the Eastern Churches, both NEW and Out of Print. We issue booklists of available NEW items. We are always ready to purchase used books on this subject.

DUCKETT, 140 Strand, London, W.C.2

## UNESCO BOOK COUPONS

The attention of our French subscribers is drawn to the possibility of paying their subscriptions to the *Eastern Churches Quarterly* with Unesco Book Coupons, and thus avoiding the difficulties of currency regulations.

Unesco Book Coupons, which exist in denominations of \$1, \$3, \$10, \$30, \$100 and a 'blank' coupon, which can be filled in for amounts from 1 to 99 U.S. cents, can be bought for French francs at the official rate of exchange.

Requests for coupons should be addressed to the French distributing body, whose address is given below :

SERVICES DES BIBLIOTHÈQUES DE FRANCE,  
55 RUE ST DOMINIQUE,  
PARIS 7E.

The requisite amount of coupons should be sent, together with your order, to :

MESSRS GEORGE E. J. COLDWELL, LTD  
17 RED LION SQUARE  
LONDON, W.C.1



# THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW

A Quarterly of Catholic Thought  
Published by the Benedictine Monks of Downside Abbey  
Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Nr Bath.

SUMMER 1956

God and Logical Analysis	Dom Illtyd Trethowan and Bro Leo Williams
Philosopher's English : A Protest	John Coulson
Some Reflexions suggested by Canon 1399	Mgr Humphrey J. T. Johnson
Christian Tragedy	Dom A. F. Glencross
Buddhist Morality	David Snellgrove
Book Reviews	
Commentary	
Correspondence	

*The Annual Subscription of Seventeen shillings is payable  
to the Secretary, The Downside Review, Stratton-on-the-Fosse,  
Nr Bath. (Single Copies 4/3 post free)*

## WORSHIP

A REVIEW DEVOTED TO THE  
LITURGICAL APOSTOLATE

VERNACULAR	PARISH PARTICIPATION
SACRAMENTALS	FAMILY LIFE
DIALOGUE MASS	LAITY AND BREVIARY
MYSTICAL BODY	CHRISTIAN ART
LAY PRIESTHOOD	SOCIAL PROBLEMS

**WORSHIP** has been accorded the gold medal award by the  
Catholic Press Association for being the best magazine in  
its class.

*Published monthly*

*One year 27s. 6d.*

## Duckett

140 Strand, London, W.C.2

# THE FLEUR DE LYS SERIES

## OF SPIRITUAL CLASSICS

A paper-bound series intended to make available at popular prices some of the shorter devotional works which have come down from past ages of the Christian Church

**ON JESUS AT TWELVE YEARS OLD.** Meditations of St Aelred.

This work, written in the middle of the twelfth century, has never appeared in English before. It is a suitable introduction to St Aelred's beautiful writings. 3s. 6d.

**THE SCHOOL OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE.** Meditations on the spiritual life by three Cistercians of the late 12th and 13th centuries belonging to the School of St Bernard. 3s.

**THE DIVINE LOVE.** The Treatises *De Laude Caritatis*, and *De Amore Sponsi ad Sponsam*, by Hugh of St Victor.

The blessedness of Christian love in the fullest sense is extolled in writing whose beauty and fervour raise it to a rare height of spiritual devotion. 2s. 6d.

**ON THE NATURE AND DIGNITY OF LOVE.** A Soliloquy of William of St Thierry.

A first English translation of a 13th-century MS. long known to scholars in the original Latin. 3s. 6d.

**THE MYSTICAL VINE.** The *Vitis Mystica* of St Bonaventure, on the Seven Words from the Cross. 3s. 6d.

**OF CLEAVING TO GOD.** The *De Adhærendo Deo*, attributed to St Albert the Great. 2s. 6d.

**ON CONTEMPLATING GOD.** A Soliloquy of William of St Thierry. 2s. 6d.

## MOWBRAYS

Theological Publishers and Booksellers

28 MARGARET STREET, OXFORD CIRCUS, W.1

Also obtainable through any bookseller

## THREE GREAT PICTORIAL BIOGRAPHIES

### **St Plus X**

photographs by LEONARD VON MATT  
text by NELLO VIAN

150 superb photographs by a leading Swiss photographer, grouped into sections, each with an essay by Nello Vian, whose father was a personal friend of this Saint of our time.

30s. net.

### **St Francis of Assisi**

photographs by LEONARD VON MATT  
text by WALTER HAUSER

A companion volume to *St Plus X*, magnificently capturing the Franciscan landscape, and the objects used by St Francis. 200 pages of illustrations. 30s. net.

### **St Ignatius Loyola**

photographs by LEONARD VON MATT  
text by HUGO RAHNER

Published to celebrate the Ignatian Year, capturing all the loveliness and splendour of the Spanish and Italian scene, and all the masterpieces of art and architecture which illuminate the life of the founder of the Jesuits. 226 pages of illustrations.

30s. net.

## **Principles of Sacramental Theology**

by BERNARD LEEMING, S.J.

An essential book wherever sacramental theology is discussed, Father Leeming deals with his great subject clearly and concisely, citing the relevant declarations of the Church, summarizing the doctrine and indicating the main reasons for it. He also discusses controversies between Catholics and members of other congregations bluntly and fairly. 30s. net.

### **TWO MORE BOOKS TO REMEMBER**

'Catholicism and the Ecumenical Movements'  
by John M. Todd 6s. 6d. net.

'They Speak by Silences' by a Carthusian 7s. 6d. net.

## **LONGMANS**

## THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

*A monthly review edited by the English Dominicans, designed for the laity, religious and clergy and dealing with the spiritual life.*

Recent contributions : *The Nature of Sanctity* by J. Cartmell ; *Catholics and International Peace* by John M. Todd ; *Christ in the Koran* by Majid Fakhry ; *Love of God and the Liturgy* by Illtud Evans, O.P. ; *Monasticism Today* by John Fitzsimons ; *The Mystic's Love* by Conrad Pepler, O.P. ; *The Use of the Jesus Prayer* by a Monk of the Eastern Church.

*Annual subscription 17s. 6d.      Single copies 1s. 6d.*

*Free specimen copy sent on request*

**BLACKFRIARS PUBLICATIONS**  
34 Bloomsbury Street, London W.C.1

## Geo. E. J. Coldwell Ltd

NEW ADDRESS:

**17 RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1**

I supply your  
Book Needs.

I am anxious to buy  
second-hand books by  
Catholic Authors .:

*My old stock was completely destroyed by  
enemy action and it must be remade .:*

### PLEASE NOTE:

Subscriptions for 'Eastern Churches Quarterly' for 1956 must be sent in to above address early to enable us to proceed.

The Price appears on the Front Cover.

# PAX

THE QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE BENEDICTINES  
OF PRINKNASH

## CONTENTS OF SUMMER NUMBER, 1956

The Abbot's Letter	
At the Tomb of the Prince Imperial	Harold Kurtz
The Human Scene	E. I. Watkin
Kinalekin	A Monk of Parkminster
The Significance of Fr Henry Tristram	Dr Zeno, O.F.M. Cap.
The Abbey of St Gall	Robert Sencourt
Dom Pedro Subercaseaux-Errazuriz (1880-1956)	H.F.
Community Notes	
Reviews of Books	

Single copy 2/- post free. Annual subscription 7/6 post free.

FROM

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLICATIONS  
PRINKNASH ABBEY  
GLOUCESTER

### THE REVIEW

## "Église Vivante"

GIVES THE EDUCATED CHRISTIAN A  
KNOWLEDGE OF THE MISSIONARY  
TEACHING OF THE CHURCH AND OF  
THE PROBLEMS AND CIVILISATIONS  
OF ALL MISSION LANDS

Its annual Bibliographical Supplement  
records everything which is published  
in regard to Ecclesiology.

Yearly, 500 pages in 4 volumes  
16/- (with the Supplement 19/-)

**DUCKETT**

140 Strand, London, W.C.2

Free specimen on demand at  
the Review's address :

28, rue des Joyeuses Entrées,  
LOUVAIN (Belgium).

## Catholic Records Press

EXETER

ECCLESIASTICAL

SCHOLASTICAL

EDUCATIONAL

COMMERCIAL

DEVOTIONAL

LITURGICAL

MEDICAL

for all Printing  
requirements



★ BOOKS ★

BIBLICAL STUDIES  
CHURCH HISTORY, PATRISTICS  
BYZANTIUM, MEDIEVAL LATIN  
SCHOLASTICISM, PALAEOGRAPHY  
ART, &c.

●  
British and American, European and Oriental  
Second-hand and New. Catalogues free

●  
W. HEFFER & SONS LTD, Petty Cury, Cambridge

# BOOKS

THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY HENRY REEVE

THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY HENRY REEVE  
IN THREE VOLUMES  
VOL. I  
NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. ALLEN, 1840.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY HENRY REEVE  
IN THREE VOLUMES  
VOL. I  
NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. ALLEN, 1840.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY HENRY REEVE  
IN THREE VOLUMES  
VOL. I  
NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. ALLEN, 1840.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY HENRY REEVE  
IN THREE VOLUMES  
VOL. I  
NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. ALLEN, 1840.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY HENRY REEVE  
IN THREE VOLUMES  
VOL. I  
NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. ALLEN, 1840.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY HENRY REEVE  
IN THREE VOLUMES  
VOL. I  
NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. ALLEN, 1840.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY HENRY REEVE  
IN THREE VOLUMES  
VOL. I  
NEW YORK: PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. ALLEN, 1840.



